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ABSTRACT

This is the national evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project, a Federally funded educational demonstration program carried out in schools in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Kansas City. The report presents the latest findings on the status of program implementation, and provides diagnostic information that PUSH-EXCEL and the schools may find useful in program development. Contained in the report are a discussion of the first year (1979-80) of the PUSH-EXCEL program and a review of the program's activities during Fall 1980. This description is based on observations at the school sites and on information supplied by the program. Procedures used to collect data on student and school outcomes are discussed. Data are then analyzed for the following areas: (1) attendance: (2) teacher perceptions: (3) student perceptions and norms: (4) atmosphere outside the school: (5) student career aspiration and expectation: (6) student performance in school: and (7) student use of after school time and self-improvement. The report concludes with a discussion of the findings in the context of current program practice and implications for the future. (Author/APM)

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The National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project

Technical Report 3: The Program, the School and the Students

Prepared for the National Institute of Education, DOE, Washington, D.C.

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NOTE ON AUTHORSHIP

All members of the evaluation staff contributed to this report. Dr. Saundra R. Murray (Project Director), Dr. Charles A. Murray (Principal Investigator), Dr. Patricia A. Parham, Ms. Linda M. Kumi, and Ms. Frances E. Gragg were the coauthors. They were assisted by Ms. Laura Z. Malakoff, Mr. Stephen L. Dory, Ms. Mary L. Martin, Ms. Jeanine E. Byl, and Ms. Mary E. Medved. Ms. Linda M. Smith (Chattanooga), Ms. Ann K. Lee (Denver), Ms. Dianne Merrill (Denver), and Mr. Uthman F. Muhammad (Chicago) conducted the interviews.

PREFACE

This is the fourth in a series of six major reports in the PUSH for Excellence (PUSH-EXCEL) Project.* The first was the Evaluation Design, released in September 1979. Subsequently, two technical reports were published, the first in March 1980 and the second in November 1980. They described the program's progress in the first demonstration year, which begin in September 1979.

The present report has two purposes: to present the latest findings on the status of program implementation, and to provide diagnostic information that PUSH-EXCEL and the schools may find useful in program development. To do this, we draw on extensive observation and baseline interview data that have been collected over the past 12 months.

Updates on the program and the evaluation comprise the first part of the project. In part II, we present analyses of the baseline data. Chapter 5 discusses the baseline findings in the context of current program practice and implications for future efforts. It is structured so that readers can obtain a succinct, but complete overview of findings that were presented in detail in the preceding technical portions.

*Murray, S.R. & Murray, C.A. National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project: Phase I; Evaluation Design. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, September 1979.

Murray, S.R., Murray, C.A., Rouse, W.V., Clair, G.A., Kumi, L.M., & Johnson, J.H. National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project: The Evolution of a Program. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, March 1980.

Murray, S.R., Murray, C.A., Kumi, L.M., & Rouse, W.V. National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project: Technical Report No. 2: Implementation. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, November 1980.

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PART ONE:
Update on the Program and the Evaluation

The chapters in the following section describe the status of the Push for Excellence (PUSH-EXCEL) program and the evaluation. Chapter I discusses briefly the program during 1979-80, the first year in which PUSH-EXCEL was a federally-funded demonstration, and reviews the program's activities during fall 1980. The description is based on AIR's observations at the sites and on information supplied by the program. The data cover the period from September 1980 to February 1981.

Chapter II summarizes the procedures AIR is following to collect data on student and school outcomes. We describe the types of samples, methods of sample selection, and timing of data collection.

1. The Status of the Program

PUSH-EXCEL is a program in the process of evolution. It began late in December 1975 as a national movement to stimulate excellence in the schools, and subsequently received private and Federal funds to develop a generalizable program. Twenty-one high schools in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Kansas City tried "total involvement" -- the participation of parents, educators, students, and communities in the educational process as an approach to solving the problems of schools. Over a four-year period that began during the 1975-76 school year, the three sites initiated new activities, devised an approach to staffing, and articulated a set of goals and objectives.

In 1978, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (DHEW) announced plans for a three-year demonstration of PUSH-EXCEL. One million dollars was to be awarded annually. The national evaluation began in February 1979, concurrently with the program's initial contract. The first activity was a field study of PUSH-EXCEL in action.

The study documented the evolutionary character of PUSH-EXCEL. Although the sites had a common foundation, none fully implemented the movement's ideology. New activities were tried and old ones dropped. The plans for new sites indicated fresh approaches. To keep track of a developing, changing program, the evaluators would have to conduct frequent audits of program components as they were put in place.

This chapter is the latest in a series of such audits. We begin with a brief overview of the first year of the demonstration. This is followed by a discussion of where the program stands now.

THE FIRST DEMONSTRATION YEAR, 1979-80

September 1979 marked the start of the first full year of Federal demonstration funding. Six sites -- Chattanooga, Chicago, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Denver, and Memphis -- were designated as demonstration programs. A national office in Chicago was to provide training and technical assistance, disseminate information, and administer the program's DHEW contract.

There were early accomplishments:

- Local communities were energized to tackle the problems facing their schools. The evidence was in the large turnouts for the program's start-up activities and the resources donated by churches, businesses, and individual citizens.

- Recognition and approval were high among students. Teachers and parents, although they saw no immediate good, saw potential in the PUSH-EXCEL concept.

- Two new sites were organized as planned. School and site advisory councils were established and initiated activities based on the schools and their neighborhoods.

- Program activities, which depend on voluntary participation, engaged students and, less frequently, parents, teachers, and community members.

But like most large-scale programs in their early stages, PUSH-EXCEL had its share of start-up problems:

- The guidelines provided by the national office were insufficient for local program development and operation. They did not link program activities to the expectations for program impact.

- Mechanisms for identifying problems and adjustments were lacking. Technical assistance from the national office was virtually nil.

- Roles were ambiguous and communications channels snarled. Turnover among senior staff, locally and nationally, was a chronic problem.

The first two technical reports of the national evaluation cited the accomplishments and the problems. The concerns hinged on the need for a systematic approach to program development. The national office, self-defined as the central mechanism for this task, figured prominently in those concerns. The update that follows begins with activities since publication of the most recent evaluation report in November 1980.

THE NATIONAL OFFICE

Staffing

In November 1980, the PUSH-EXCEL national staff consisted of a Director and an Administrative Assistant. Two slots were open: Assistant Director for Program Planning, Training and Evaluation and Deputy Director for Site Operations. The first of these was filled in December. Recruiting is still underway for the second. Staff from the national office of Operation PUSH assist the Director in public relations and fiscal management. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, founder and President of PUSH-EXCEL, Inc., serves as a catalyst of local initiatives. Figure 1.1 shows the current organization of the national office.

At the March 1980 Directors Conference, the Rev. Jackson charged the local and national staffs with the responsibility for program development. He would continue the national movement. The directive separating movement and program functions resulted in visible deemphasis of promotion and expansion, and more attention to the nuts and bolts of program development.

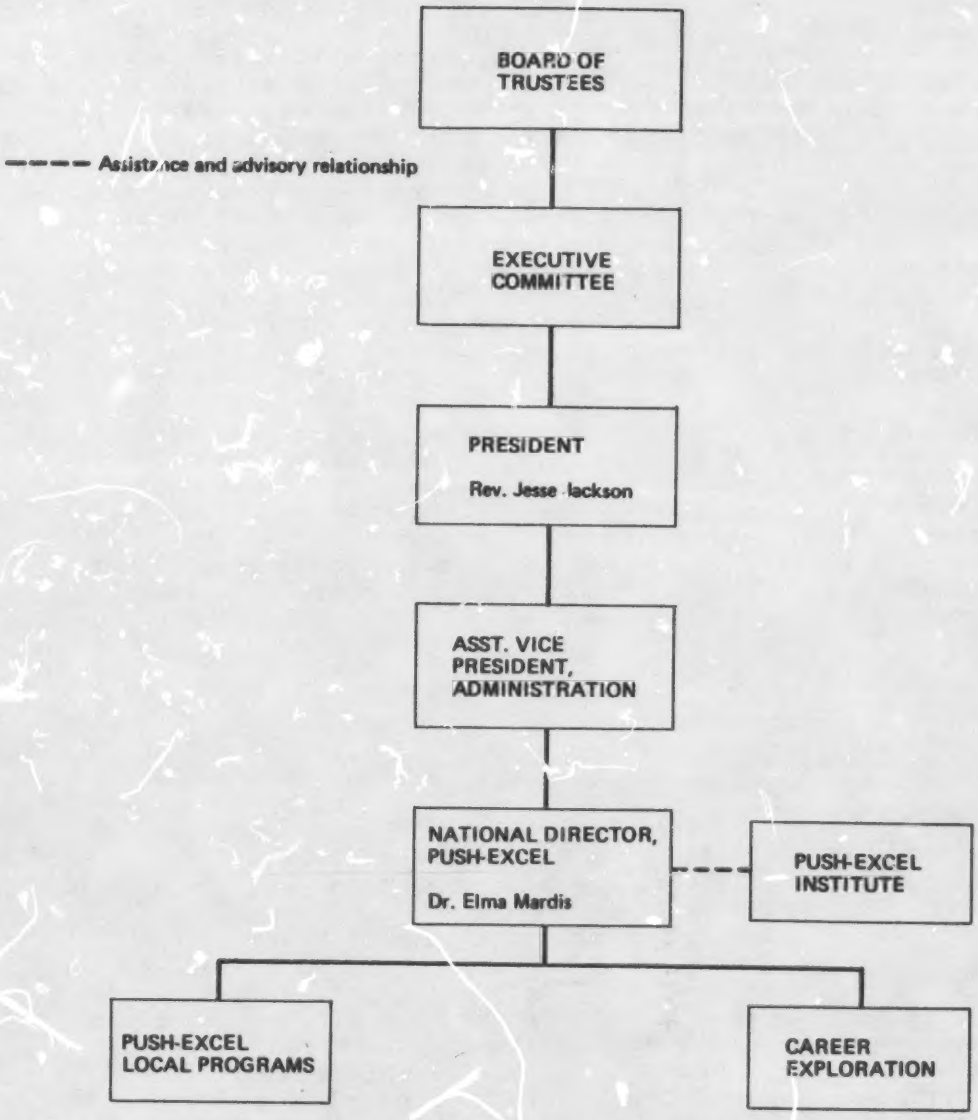

FIGURE 1.1. National PUSH for Excellence Organization Chart

Activities

Site monitoring. Until 1980, national staff visits to the sites took place largely during the planning and start-up phases. Visits after the program was underway were rare. The situation changed in the spring of 1980, when the national director visited the Chicago and Chattanooga sites to monitor staff functions. During the current school year, members of the national staff (new as of August 1980) have visited Chattanooga, Kansas City, Buffalo, and Los Angeles to observe or participate in selected activities of the site offices. Also, the national staff have worked with the Chicago staff to redefine program functions there. Denver has not yet been visited.

Training. The first technical report of the evaluation described staff training offered by the national office as a series of sessions in which program philosophy was explained and site problems aired. Two subsequent training conferences, one held in March 1980 and the other in November 1980, were structured to address issues of implementation. At the most recent conference, for example, the agenda included:

- a workshop on initiating and sustaining parental involvement;
- a workshop on conducting and using findings of an evaluation to strengthen the program;
- three sessions presenting the current model for program implementation; and
- a presentation on fiscal planning and management.

Fiscal administration. During the first year of the demonstration and fall 1980, the primary funding for PUSH-EXCEL was a $1 million annual grant from the Department of Education. It was channeled to the sites through the national office on a cost reimbursable basis. As expenses were incurred, vouchers were submitted to Chicago for payment. Reimbursement was often delayed under this system: The sites cited several instances of slow turnaround in the processing of vouchers. Moreover, the local directors were often unsure of the status of

their own budgets because reports were slow in coming from the national office.

To correct these problems, the PUSH-EXCEL Board of Trustees voted in January 1981 to disburse Federal funds to the sites on a quarterly basis. The new plan was to go into effect in March 1981, which marked the start of the next funding cycle. As of this writing, however, Federal funding has not been approved for the 1981-82 year. Current levels and sources of funds for each local program are shown in Table 1.1.

Program development. Creating viable programs has been the national staff's top priority since March 1980. The second technical report described two of their early developmental efforts, the drafting of a Primer and an Implementation Guide. These spelled out in substantial detail the content of the PUSH-EXCEL program and how it is to be carried out. These steps have been taken to insure that the elaborated program model described in the Implementation Guide will be understandable and usable by local program personnel:

- In July and August 1980, the Implementation Guide was circulated in draft form to local program directors;
- In August and September 1980, local directors submitted write-ups of activities to be included in the Guide;
- The program model was used in a training workshop at the November 1980 Directors Conference;
- PUSH-EXCEL, Inc. contracted the work of producing the final version of the Guide to a Chicago-based group, The Center for New Schools. The first draft was submitted January 1981.

The local programs have responded to these initiatives in different ways. Buffalo, new in September 1980, agreed to conduct a pilot run of the implementation model. Los Angeles and Kansas City are fitting existing activities into the model and identifying new areas for local development according to the Guide. Denver has developed a modified version of the model. Chattanooga is taking a wait-and-see approach.

TABLE 1.1
1980-81 Project Funding

	Source	Amount
Buffalo	Department of Education	$ 91,160
	Buffalo Board of Education	100,000
	Total Budget	191,160
Chattanooga	Department of Education	66,929
	Chattanooga Public Schools	36,436
	National PUSH-EXCEL	26,977
	Local Community Sources	121,000
	Total Budget	311,342
Chicago	Department of Education	148,890
	Chicago Community Trust	Pending
	National PUSH-EXCEL	Pending
	Department of Labor	Pending
	Total Budget	148,890
Denver	Department of Education	71,000
	Mountain Bell	2,500
	Piton Foundation	30,000
	Denver Public Schools	
	Cash	49,875
	In-Kind	25,000
	Johnson Foundation	5,000
	To Be Raised	40,154
	Total Budget	223,529
Kansas City	Department of Education	103,600
	National PUSH-EXCEL	13,860
	Department of Labor	Pending
	Total Budget	117,460
Los Angeles	Department of Education	132,000
	CETA	274,113
	Total Budget	$406,113

The Guide came too late to have much effect on the fall 1980 activities. Fall 1980 activities in the local sites reflected plans the local programs had made independently of the Guide. We review current programs at each site in the following sections.

BUFFALO

The Buffalo program is in place in an elementary school (K-8) and high school (9-12). The former, Public School #80, is located in a working-class community in northern Buffalo. The student body's ethnic balance, 52 percent black and 47 percent white, has recently been achieved through the school district's desegregation plan. South Park High School is in a predominantly Irish, working-class community in southern Buffalo. The student body is 56 percent white, 39 percent black, and six percent Hispanic/Indian, as achieved by one-way bussing. Both schools were selected from 20 candidate sites because of their potential for housing a successful program. Major problems confronting both schools are absenteeism and the development of positive student-teacher-parent relationships.

Organization

Figure 1.2 shows the organization of the Buffalo program. All PUSH-EXCEL staff, two community liaisons, four half-time community education liaisons, and two half-time teacher-advisors are responsible to the PUSH-EXCEL Director. She and the staff assigned to each school work closely with the principal. Advisory committees are responsible for developing the support of their constituents. Though the Board of Education is not depicted in the chart, they have contributed in-kind services to the program -- funds for staff, materials and equipment, and activities -- and provided a school liaison to serve as the official link between themselves and the PUSH-EXCEL program.

Program Activities: 1979-80

No in-school activities occurred during this period. The Director was hired in November 1979 and spent the remainder of the academic year and summer engaged in preimplementation activities. These included: (1) forming the city-wide advisory council; (2) hiring and

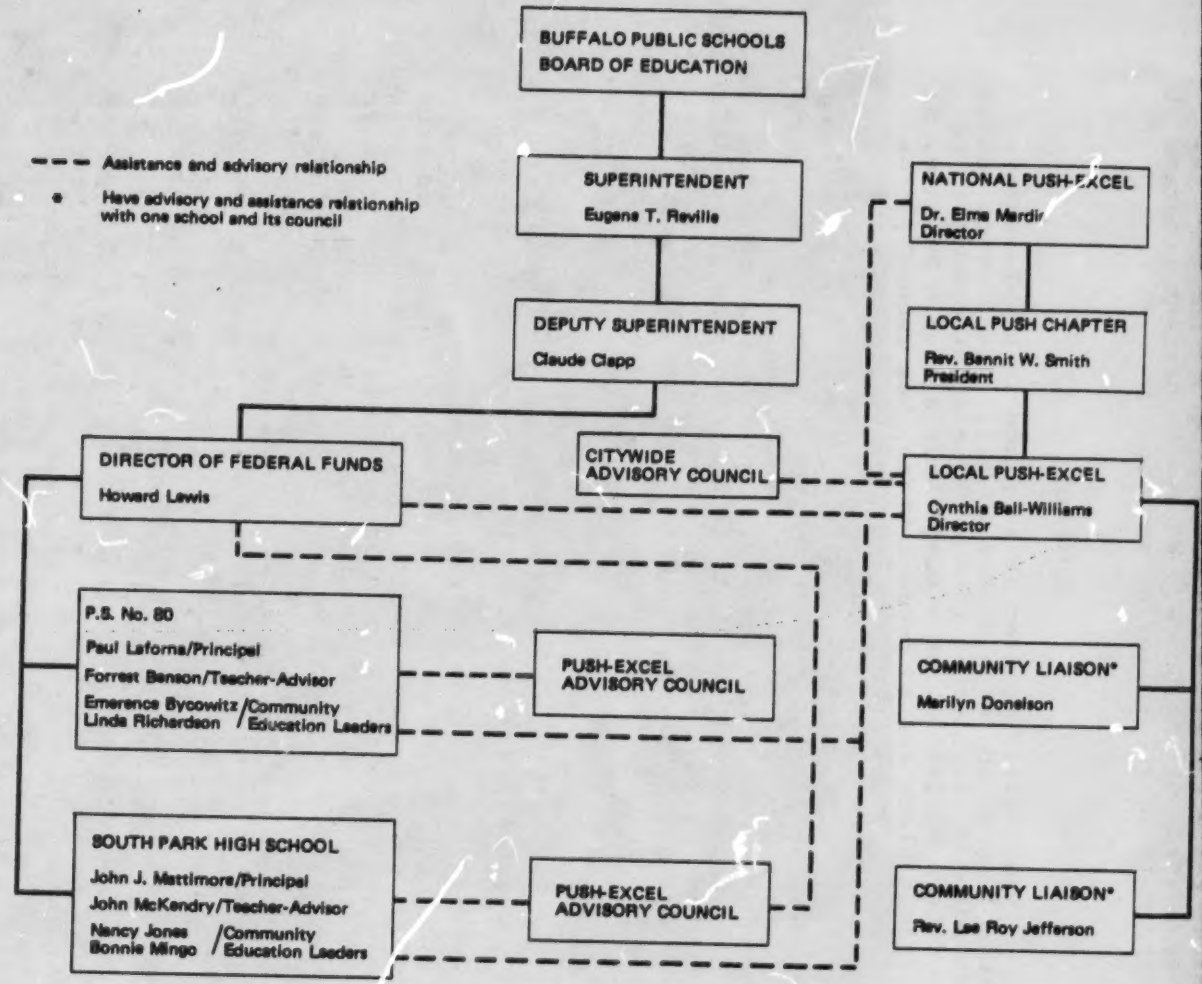

FIGURE 1.2. Buffalo PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

orienting staff; (3) compiling a demographic profile of the City of Buffalo; (4) selecting participating schools; and (5) soliciting the support of the Board of Education and public school officials and staff.

Fall 1980

Site-wide activities were similar in the two schools, although few are in the same stage of implementation at each school. The year commenced with kick-off assemblies featuring the Rev. Jesse Jackson; State-of-the-School addresses by the principals; and in-service training for teachers. The areas of concentrated activity included:

- A media campaign involving both television and radio broadcasts. PUSH-EXCEL does a weekly segment on a local radio show. Several newspaper articles have also appeared in both the Buffalo Courier Express and the Challenger newspaper (a weekly, black publication);

- Business and industry luncheons to collect pledges and garner support from organizations. A special effort was made to have businesses in each school's neighborhood conduct tours, speak to students, etc., as part of the career development aspect of the program, as well as to solicit their financial support;

- Collection of student pledges and motivating them to become involved in the program. Incentives included participation in activities such as cultural and career-oriented field trips and participation on the PUSH-EXCEL cheerleading squad (Public School #80);

- Parent-teacher conferences in conjunction with report card pickups. (They were mandatory in order for parents to see report cards at the elementary school.)

Teachers in both schools requested that their pledges be modified to exclude statements that asked them to exchange home phone numbers with parents. Several months were spent in negotiation with the National Office over this issue. Permission for the requested change has subsequently been obtained.

Engagement levels. Table 1.2 shows the activities and their associated levels of participation in the Buffalo PUSH-EXCEL schools. It highlights the fact that implementation is progressing more rapidly in the elementary school than in the high school, where the school component of the program is severely limited. In both schools, the number of student and parent pledgees far exceeds the number of participants in any one activity, with the exception of Report Card Pickups.

CHATTANOOGA

Six schools constitute the Chattanooga program. Half are junior high schools: Alton Park, Hardy, and Orchard Knob. The others -- Howard, Kirkman, and Riverside -- are senior high schools serving grades ten through twelve. All are relatively small, with enrollments under 1,000. All are located within the inner-core of the city. The enrollments at all but Kirkman are almost entirely black; approximately 43 percent of Kirkman's students are white and 57 percent are black. The schools were selected to host PUSH-EXCEL on the basis of need. The problems include high absenteeism and low schoolwide scores on standardized achievement measures.

Organization

Chattanooga implemented its planned structural approach during the first year of operation. Figure 1.3 shows the current organization chart. Responsibility is shared by the school district and PUSH for Excellence, Inc. The community liaisons report to the PUSH-EXCEL director, whereas the teacher-advisors are supervised by the principals. The School District Coordinator is responsible for all in-school functions. The PUSH-EXCEL director has similar responsibility for out-of-school activities. The governance committees plan and monitor activities in their respective schools. The principals serve on the governance committees and on the advisory council.

TABLE 1.2

Level of Participation in Buffalo PUSH-EXCEL Activities by School for Fall 1980

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Public School #80		
Students	Pledges	400 (85% student body)
	Career Exploration Field Trips	No data
	Election '80	380
	EXCEL Cheerleaders	20
Parents	Pledges	125
	PTA	No data
	Election '80	25
	Report Card Pickup	90%
School	Teacher Orientation	No data
	Home Visits to Parents of Problem Children by the Principal	No data
	Election '80	19
	EXCEL Council and Community Breakfast	15
Community	Bailey Avenue Business Pledges	11
	EXCEL Council and Community Breakfast	16
	Kensington Business District Board of Directors Meeting	No data
	Meeting with Local Clergy	No data
	Operation PUSH Donation	1 radio show/month
	Election '80	10
South Park High School		
Students	Pledges	450
	Toronto Science Center Tour	No data
	Jr. Class Dance at Convention Center	90
	PUSH-EXCEL Kickoff	1,600
	State of the School Address	600
Parents	Pledges	150
	Report Card Pickup	30%
	Parent Conference	No data
	PUSH-EXCEL Kickoff	50

TABLE 1.2 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
School	Pledges	No data
	Teacher	No data
	PUSH-EXCEL Kickoff	25
	State of the School Address	1
Community	Business and Community Leaders (2 meetings)	No data
	Clergy and Community Meetings (4 meetings)	No data
	PUSH-EXCEL Kickoff	25

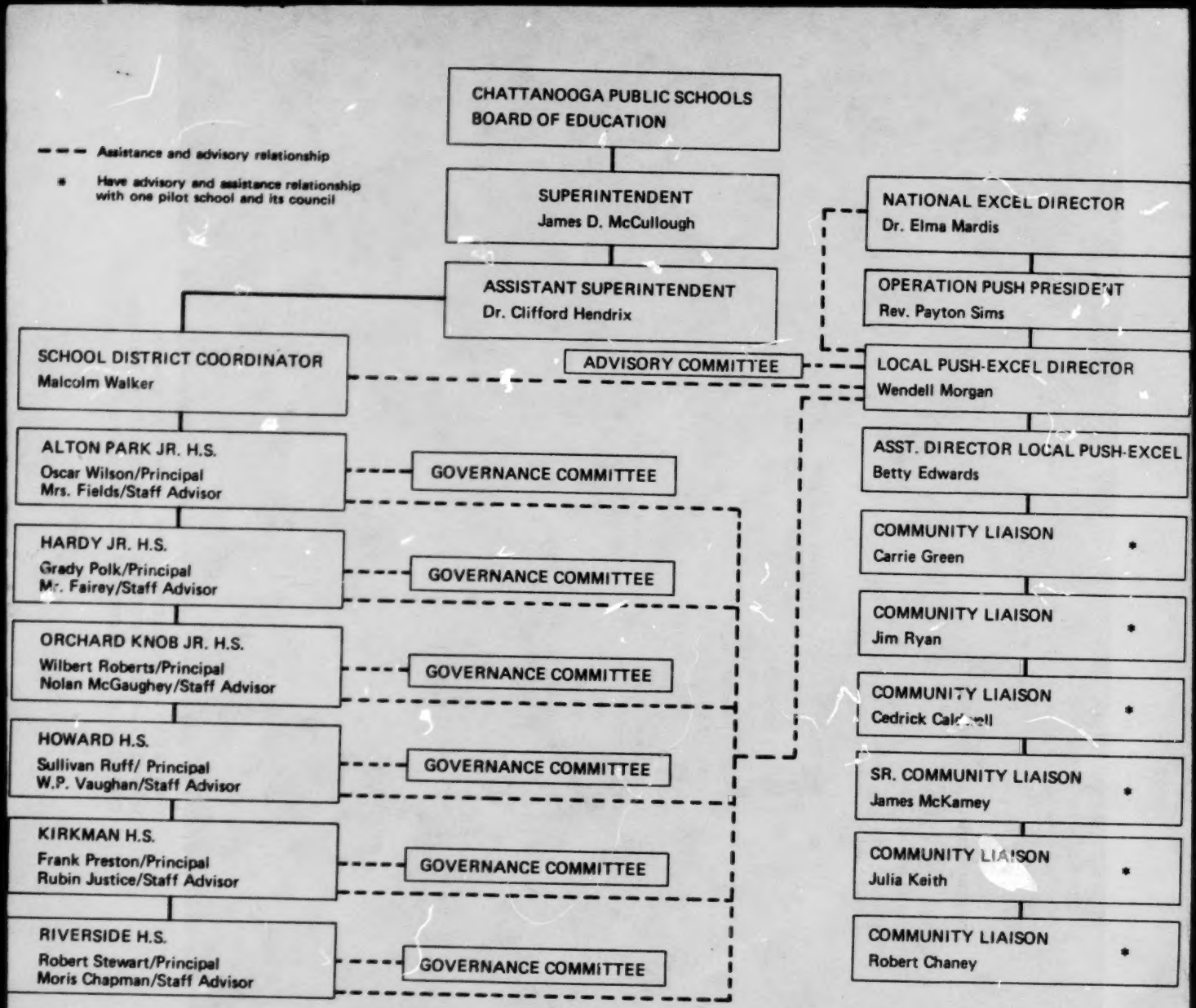

FIGURE 1.3. Chattanooga PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

When the last technical report was published, the program was recruiting a new director. The slot was filled in late October and the new director joined the staff in November. Disruptions in program continuity were minimal.

Program Activities: Fall 1980

The site-wide activities implemented last year were continued (see Report No. 2, pp. 7 to 9, and Table 1.3 summarizing Chattanooga activities). New inputs fall into two categories:

- Community and teacher mobilization. In the first two months of the semester, the program compiled rosters of churches, businesses, civic and social groups, and sororities and fraternities. A memo proposing specific activities (e.g., prizes for perfect paper auction, volunteer tutors, use of bulletins for program announcements and slogans) was prepared for each group and copies mailed to individual organizations on the roster. Follow-up is assigned to the community liaisons, who have a specific number of contacts to make each week.

Staff and members of the advisory council conducted a teacher orientation session in each school, and teachers were asked to sign pledges.

- Activities for increased home-school cooperation. This has taken two forms. One is home visits to parents of chronic absentees (Riverside, Alton Park, and Hardy). The other is the use of "Happy Grams," brief teacher-prepared progress reports on individual students, to inform parents of classroom behavior. "Happy Grams" are being used in connection with the district-wide assertive discipline program, designed to check disciplinary problems before they become chronic or extremely disruptive.

TABLE 1.3

Level of Participation in Chattanooga PUSH-EXCEL Activities for 1979-80 and Fall 1980

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Sitewide			
Students	PUSH-EXCEL Mass Choir	*	120
	Radio Goes to School (Weekly Radio Program)		
Alton Park Jr. High School			
Students	Pledges	148	270
	Club for Chronic Absentees (Pushettes)	*	40
	Media Committee	10	***
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide
Parents	Pledges	255	158
	Report Card Pickup 1	375	256
	Report Card Pickup 2	265	280
	Report Card Pickup 3	275	Planned for Spring 1981
	PTA	23-42	No data
	Parent Volunteers to Monitor Discipline	*	3
	Distribution of Newsletter and Monthly Calendar of School Events	*	Schoolwide
	Ceramic Club	*	15
School	Pledges (Teacher and Principal)	*	33
	Educational Field Trips	**	3 Classes
Community	Senior Citizen Volunteers	No data	No data
Hardy Jr. High School			
Students	Pledges	320	Est. 150
	After School Tutoring	*	15-20
	Chronic Absentees	*	31
	Baseketball Team	18	25
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide

Note: Special events for students have been omitted from this table.

TABLE 1.3 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Hardy Jr. High School (Cont.)			
Students	Newsletter	*	15
	Perfect Paper Auction	*	
	Media Committee	16	***
Parents	Pledges	72	58
	After School Tutors	*	4
	Home Visits to Pledged Parents	*	15 (Dec.)
	Report Card Pickup 1	400+	274
	Report Card Pickup 2	No data	269
	Report Card Pickup 3	213	Planned for Spring 1981
	Contact with Parents of Chronic Absentees (December)	*	11
School	Pledges (Teacher & Principal)	*	31
	Happy Grams Mailed	*	444 (Sept.-Nov.)
	After School Tutors		2 Teachers
	Educational Field Trips	**	6 Classes
Howard High School			
Students	Pledges	239	289
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide
	Voter Registration	120	Planned for Spring 1981
	Media Committee	13	***
	Parent Student Concern Organization	No data	No data
Parents	Pledges	121	119
	Parent Newsletter		
	Report Card Pickup 1	335	189
	Report Card Pickup 2	91	53
	Report Card Pickup 3	205	Planned for Spring 1981
	Parent Student Concern Organization	No data	No data

TABLE 1.3 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Howard High School (Cont.)			
School	Pledges (Teacher & Principal)	*	41
	Happy Grams Mailed	*	612 (Dec.)
	Educational Field Trips		
Community	Senior Citizen Volunteers	No data	30
Kirkman High School			
Students	Pledges	431	416
	Media Committee	15	***
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide
	Newsletter		
	Voter Registration	126	
Parents	Pledges	300	110
	Report Card Pickup 1	700	145
	Report Card Pickup 2	No data	81
School	Pledges (Teacher & Principal)	*	34
	Happy Grams	*	No data
	Educational Field Trips	**	10 Classes
Community	Senior Citizen Volunteers	No data	10
Orchard Knob Jr. High School			
Students	Pledges	252	200
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide
	Media Committee	13	***
	Newsletter	No data	No data
	After School Tutoring	15	15

TABLE 1.3 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Orchard Knob Jr. High School (Cont.)			
Parents	Pledges	134	106
	Report Card Pickup 1	180	149
	Report Card Pickup 2	No data	157
	Report Card Pickup 3	102	Planned for Spring 1981
School	Pledges (Teacher & Principal)	*	21
	Happy Grams Mailed	No data	277 (Sept.)
	Educational Field Trips	**	2 Classes
Riverside High School			
Students	Pledges	35	235
	Media Committee	8	***
	Voter Registration	85	
	Attendance Competition	Schoolwide	Schoolwide
Parents	Pledges	80	10
	Report Card Pickup 1	80	94
	Report Card Pickup 2	101	55
	Report Card Pickup 3	120	Planned for Spring 1981
School	Pledges (Teacher & Principal)	*	20
	Home Visits to Parents of Chronic Absentees	*	No data
	Educational Field Trips	**	3 Classes
Community	Senior Citizen Volunteers	No data	9

*Activity was not in place during 1979-80.

**As of this writing, data on 1979-80 educational field trips are available only for the total number of trips (29) taken across schools.

***Students serve on the Media Committees on a rotating basis. Approximately 8-10 different students participate each week.

Engagement levels. Table 1.3 shows, for each component, the fall 1980 activities and the associated level of participation. The table shows that report card pickups, pledging, and mailing of Happy Grams were activities that attracted the greatest numbers of participants. Ongoing activities, such as after-school tutoring and media committees, engaged from 15 to 40 participants. The table also shows a number of new activities: teacher and principal pledges, the PUSH-EXCEL Mass Choir, and at Alton Park Jr. H.S., Hardy Jr. H.S., and Riverside H.S., home visits to parents of chronic absentees.

CHICAGO

In Chicago, ten high schools are identified as PUSH-EXCEL schools. The schools are Calumet, Chicago Vocational (CVS), Englewood, Julian, King, Manley, Marshall, Orr, and Schurz High Schools. Most of the schools are located in inner-city or suburban black neighborhoods, and have predominantly black enrollments. Two of the schools -- Morgan Park and Schurz -- have sizeable non-minority enrollments. The school enrollments range from 1,516 at Manley to 4,012 at CVS.

The selection of schools for the program was left to district superintendents and principals. In some cases, principals were attracted to the benefits of the program and asked to participate. In other cases, district superintendents felt that the program would benefit certain schools. These schools were assigned to become PUSH-EXCEL schools by their district superintendents.

Organization

The program is still undergoing major changes in personnel, as reported in the last technical report. Figure 1.4 shows the current organizational structure. A new director and a youth coordinator have been recruited, and the Parenting Director remains in her position. Two community liaisons remain on the staff and two positions became vacant this fall. A replacement has not been named for the assistant director slot that became vacant in the spring of 1980. The Career Exploration Project (CEP), an adjunct program, was continued and staffed separately.

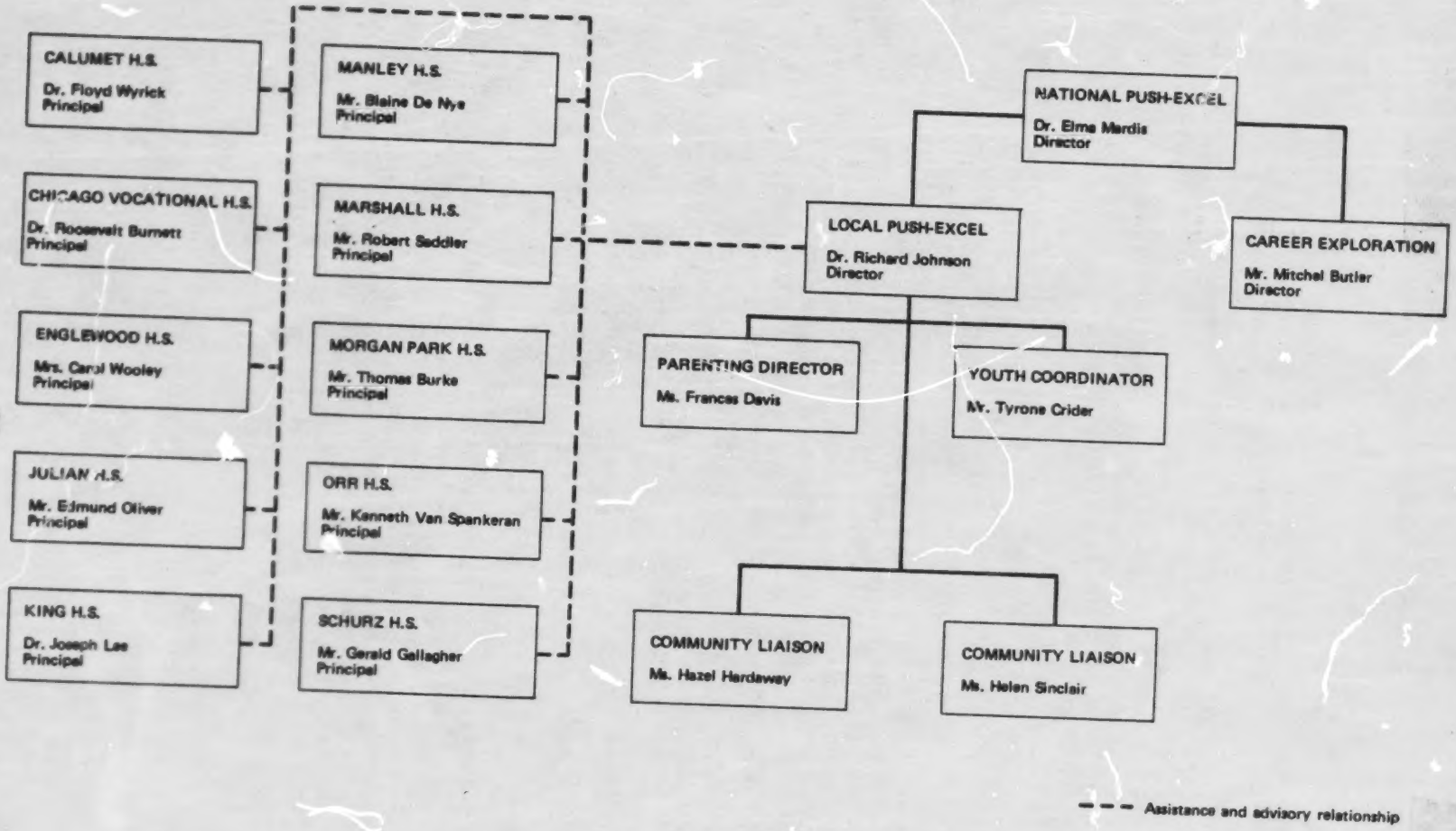

FIGURE 1.4. Chicago PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

Program Activities: Fall 1980

The program has been reexamining its goals and reformulating its strategy in light of current realities, such as a reduced funding level. Specifically, the program is implementing fewer activities than it did during the 1979-80 school year. Few in-school activities are on the roster of events, although special events have been continued at specific sites -- Community Stakeholders Meeting, Convocation, Speakers Drop-in Program (Impact Educators), Open houses -- and one has been added -- Martin Luther King Birthday Assemblies. At Manley High School, two of the school-based ongoing activities were continued -- John Hope Franklin Club and Career Exploration Classes.

Also, the focus of the program has been broadened to include, in addition to the ten PUSH-EXCEL schools, other schools, students and parents throughout the city who share a common interest in the goals of the PUSH-EXCEL program. The following activities have been implemented as a part of this expanded focus:

- PUSH-EXCEL City-Wide Action Council of Students (PECWACS). As an outgrowth of PUSH-EXCEL's mobilization of students this fall, the program organized PECWACS, a loose coalition of students who expressed an interest. The students come from eight PUSH-EXCEL schools and 25 to 30 other schools. The purpose of PECWACS is to organize and mobilize student support through technical assistance and leadership training. PECWACS has begun approaching the schools through existing groups or organizations in the schools or at the site level.

- PUSH-EXCEL Parent Congress. As a by-product of the city-wide drive for 50,000 parent pledges during the 1980-81 school year and of the Thursday Night Parent Forum, a coalition of existing parent groups was formed to examine city-wide issues that have an affect on PUSH-EXCEL goals and objectives. Also, the Parent Congress is to provide a support system for students, teachers,

principals, and PUSH-EXCEL activities. A Ministers Assembly has been organized as a part of this support system.

- PUSH-EXCEL Disc jockeys. As a part of the Impact Educators Program, PUSH-EXCEL has enlisted the cooperation of three black radio station disc jockeys. The objectives are to: (1) foster general PUSH-EXCEL concepts, goals, and objectives; (2) provide information on PUSH-EXCEL activities; (3) recruit the support of other disc jockeys as impact educators; and (4) assist in developing and airing the proposed Black History Education Program.

The site office is planning to integrate the Career Exploration and Summer Job Experience programs into city-wide efforts as well.

Engagement levels. Table 1.4 shows current activities and the associated level of participation. Pledging was the activity that engaged the highest number of participants, but it does not involve pledges in an ongoing program. The activity requiring the highest degree of sustained participation is the Career Exploration Project classes at Manley.

DENVER

The Denver PUSH-EXCEL program serves grades one through twelve in four schools: two high schools (Manual and East), a junior high (Cole), and an elementary school (Steck). Enrollments range from 350 in the elementary school to over 1,500 at one of the high schools. Because Denver public schools have participated in court-ordered bussing since 1974, all of the PUSH-EXCEL schools are racially integrated. The breakdowns in all four schools are approximately 50 percent white, 40 percent black and 10 percent other minorities. All schools except Steck bus white students from middle to upper class neighborhoods into the less affluent, racially mixed neighborhoods in which the schools are located. Steck is located in an upper middle-class white neighborhood, and minority students are bussed in from a low-income black community.

TABLE 1.4

Level of Participation in Chicago PUSH-EXCEL Activities by School for Fall 1980

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Sitewide		
Students	Pledges (Citywide excluding PUSH-EXCEL Schools)	4,124
	Convocation (total)	1,173
	Chicago Vocational	75
	Manley	99
	PUSH-EXCEL Citywide Action Council of Students (total)	40-50
	Chicago Vocational	5-10
Parents	Pledges (Citywide excluding PUSH-EXCEL Schools)	1,860
	PUSH-EXCEL Parent Congress	100
School	Principals Meeting	8
Community	Stakeholders Meeting	101
	PUSH-EXCEL Disc Jockeys	3
Calumet High School		
Students	Pledges	122
	Open House	2,100
	Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration	2,300
	Impact Educator Assembly	75
Parents	Pledges	125
	Open House	1,800
School	Open House	100
Chicago Vocational High School		
Students	Pledges	1,208
	Open House (students and parents)	3,200
	Impact Educator Assembly	53
	Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration	60

TABLE 1.4 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Chicago Vocational High School (Cont.)		
Parents	Pledges	88
	Open House (parents and students)	3,200
School	Open House	No data
Englewood High School		
Students	Pledges	126
	Open House	200
	Impact Educator Assemblies (2 assemblies)	425
	Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration	1,200
Parents	Pledges	105
	Open House	125
School	Open House	70
Julian High School		
Students	Pledges	1,389
	Open House	1,800
Parents	Pledges	68
	Open House	2,000
School	Open House	150
Martin Luther King High School		
Students	Pledges	359
	Open House	200
	Impact Educator Assembly	60
Parents	Pledges	108
	Open House	104
School	Open House	90

TABLE 1.4 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Manley High School		
Student	Pledges	391
	Open House	60
	John Hope Franklin Club	20
	Career Exploration Project (2 classes)	50
	Jessie Jackson Motivational Rally	400
	Impact Educator Assembly	350
Parents	Pledges	196
	Open House	100
School	Open House	100
Orr High School		
Students	Pledges	839
	Open House	70
Parents	Pledges	123
	Open House	850
School	Open House	130

Note: Three of the ten schools -- Marshall, Schurz, and Morgan Park -- were excluded from the table because school-based activities were not conducted during the fall.

The schools were selected to achieve a maximum "feeder" school concept. Typically, some Steck students attend Cole Jr. High, which in turn serves as a feeder to Manual.

Organization

In August 1979, the school board approved a contract between Denver Public Schools (DPS) and PUSH-EXCEL, Inc., and implementation began. The staffing structure agreed upon in the contract was put into place during the first year of operation of the program. Figure 1.5 shows the current organization chart. Program responsibilities are divided between an in-school and a community-based out-of-school staff. The teacher-advisors are full-time staff in the schools. They report to the principals, except at East where the teacher-advisor reports directly to an assistant principal in charge of Pupil Services. The community liaisons are under the direction of the PUSH-EXCEL director. The principals supervise the organization, planning, and implementation of the program in each school. The PUSH-EXCEL director coordinates activities among schools and creates school/community activities. The PUSH-EXCEL administrator supervises the program through the principals and the PUSH-EXCEL director.

Each of the two high schools has an Advisory Council responsible for planning and assessing needs and evaluating PUSH-EXCEL activities. The Advisory Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the PUSH-EXCEL director and the schools.

In the fall of 1980, two new principals were appointed to the PUSH-EXCEL schools. These changes in administration have caused minimal disruptions in program operations. But in January 1981, the assistant principal in charge of PUSH-EXCEL at East High School was replaced and the following month, the PUSH-EXCEL director resigned. A former teacher-advisor is currently serving as acting director. As of this writing, it is too early to assess the impact of this change.

Program Activities: Fall 1980

In the fall of 1980, many of the in-school activities implemented during the first year of operation (see Report No. 2 and Table 1.5) were continued, and new

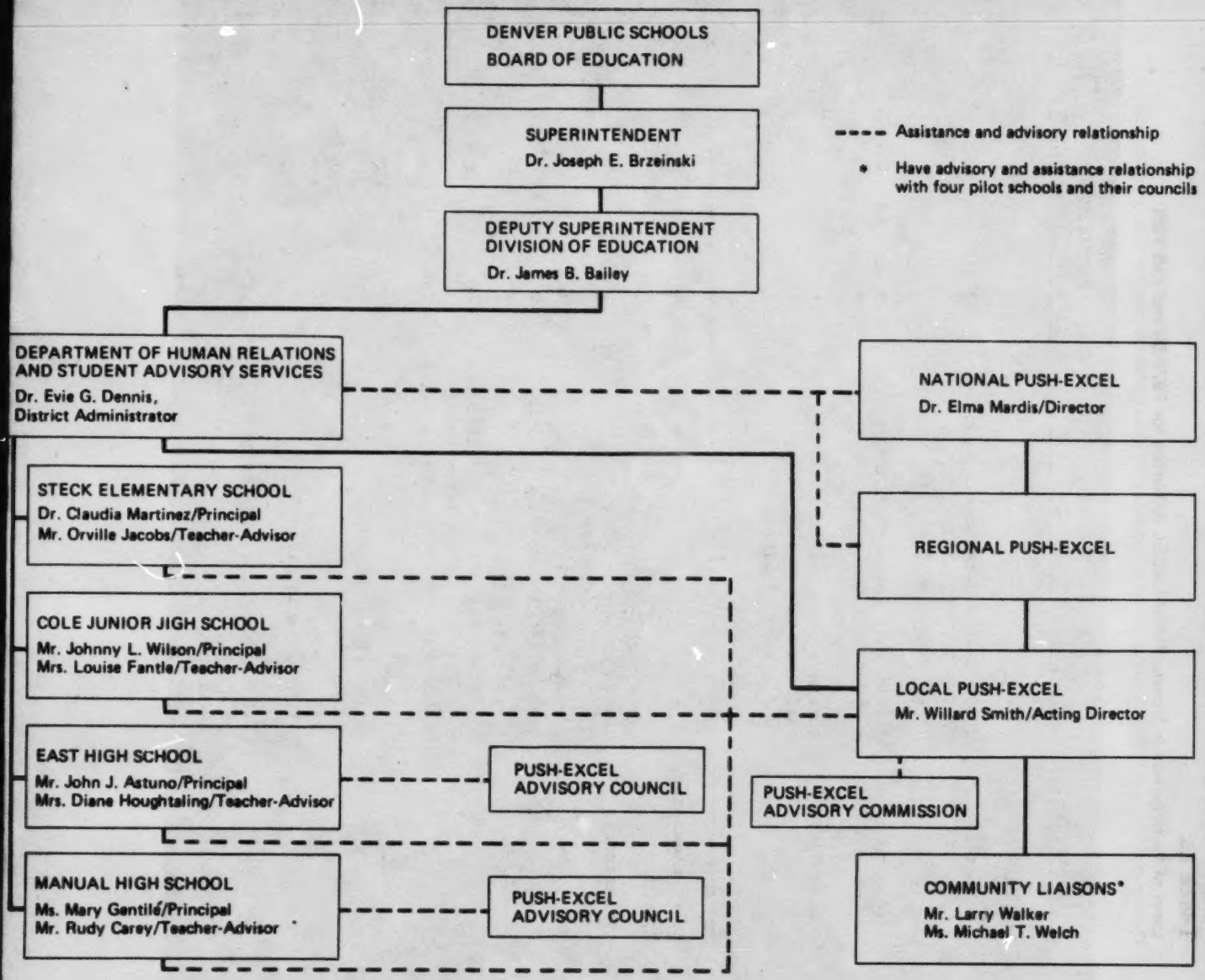

FIGURE 1.5. Denver PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

TABLE 1.5.
Level of Participation in Denver PUSH-EXCEL Activities for 1979-80 and Fall 1980

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Sitewide			
Students	Study Skills Workshops	*	85
	East H.S. "Organizing" Manual H.S. "Notetaking"	*	115
Parents	Parent Task Force Meetings	4-25 ea.	5-10 ea.
	Study Skills Committee	*	3
Community	Business Task Force	*	10
	Religious Task Force	10	6
	Fundraising Committee	*	6-7
Steck Elementary School			
Students	Pledges	285	244
	Honor Roll (data are for one 9 week period)	46	54
	Math Facts Club	150	150-200
	Computer Class	16	23
	Perfect Attendance Award (data are for one 9 week period)	60	82
	Best Classroom Attendance Awards	8	2
	School and Community Service Awards	38	6
Parents	Pledges	245	187
	Basic Skills Calendars Distributors	*	15
	Distributed	*	350
	Parent Questionnaire	*	350
School	Pledges (teachers and staff)	15	25
Community	Community Impact Educator	100	40

TABLE 1.5 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
Cole Jr. High School			
Students	Pledges	393	622
	Wall of Fame	*	12
	8th Grade Study Skills Committee	*	10
	Honor Roll (6-week period)	*	220
	Great Speakers Series (2 programs)	550	350
	After-School Clubs (13 clubs 1979-80; 3 clubs fall 1980	393	115
Parents	Pledges	36	60
School	Pledges (Teachers)	16	19
Community	Great Speakers Series	12	1
East High School			
Students	Pledges	337	415
	Student of the Month Awards (staff included)	*	10-20
	Student/Tutor Invididual Counseling (Counselors and Counselees)	394	200-400
	Class Attendance Design and Contest	No Data	372
	PUSH-EXCEL Effective Positive Peers (PEEPP)	337	412
	PUSH-EXCEL Representation on Programs and Committees	*	48
	Guest Speakers Series (two programs/year, available only to Pledgees in spring and fall 1980)	122	45
Parents	Pledges	48	70

TABLE 1.5 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 1979-80	Fall 1980
East High School (Cont.)			
School	Pledges (teachers and staff)	41	84
	Staff of the Month Award (includes students)	*	10-20
	In-School Monthly Newsletters from Teacher-Advisor to Teachers	83/month	83/month
Manual High School			
Students	Pledges	241	336
	Individual Counseling	*	50-60
	Guest Speaker's Series - 4 programs	60-80 ea.	15-50 ea.
Parents	Pledges	46	52
School	Pledges (Teachers and Staff)	41	83

Note: Acitivies that were not continued from 1979-80 to fall 1980 and special events were omitted from this table.

*Activity was not in place during 1979-80.

activities with the same themes were added. For example, more awards and recognition activities were added. Cole added the Wall of Fame and Cole for Excellence awards; and East added Most Important Student of the Month. The number of after-school clubs at Cole was reduced from 13 to three this fall.

At the site level, a few special events have been added: Marilyn Van Derbur motivational assemblies and films, and local guest speakers for assemblies during the kick-off activities of PUSH-EXCEL week. A handful of community outreach activities have been held at the PUSH-EXCEL schools this semester. Two study skills workshops for parents and students, held at East and Manual, were open to the public. The teacher-advisor at Manual spoke to students at a local junior high about the PUSH-EXCEL program; and Manual provided shuttle bus service for senior citizens who wanted to vote on election day.

~~Engagement levels.~~ Participation was highest in special events such as the motivational assemblies and kick-off activities. As Table 1.5 shows, participation in ongoing activities varied considerably from activity to activity.

KANSAS CITY

East High School is the focal point for PUSH-EXCEL in Kansas City. It is located in a working class community and its integrated student body, 63 percent minority and 37 percent white, has been achieved through Kansas City's desegregation program. One of the three schools in the program last year, East, was chosen for continuation on the basis of school and community commitment. The major problems at East include absenteeism, suspensions, and failures.

Organization

Early in 1981 the staff configuration represented in Figure 1.6 was adopted. It represented the creation of one new position, the liaison, and the loss of the secretarial position. PUSH-EXCEL staff work closely with the principal. He has appointed a teacher motivator and teacher advisor to work with the program. They are responsible to him and serve on a voluntary basis.

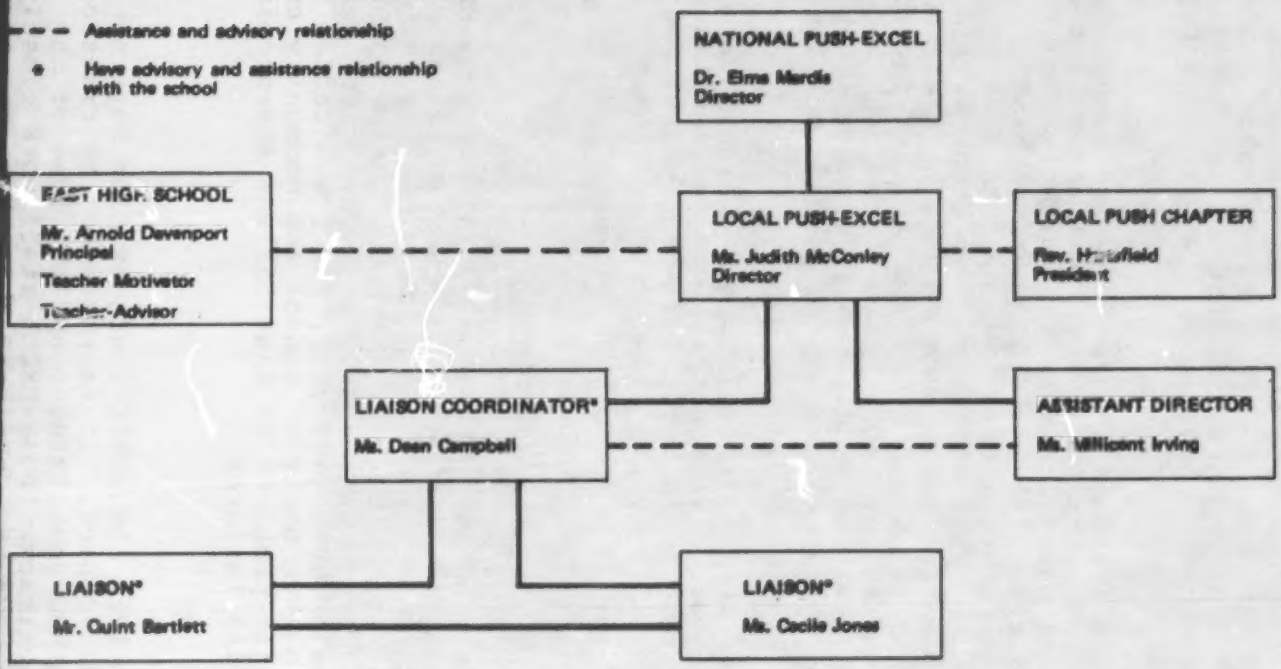

FIGURE 1.6. Kansas City PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

Program Activities: 1979-80

Because of the major changes that have occurred in the Kansas City program, a brief review of 1979-80 is in order. During the fall semester in 1979-80, the PUSH-EXCEL program was in place in three schools -- East, Central, and West -- and activities were directed toward four target groups:

- Parent participation centered on advisory groups -- one formed and one being planned. An open house was also held for PUSH-EXCEL parents.

- Community support was reflected in a business advisory board, the Adopt-A-School program, and the PUSH-EXCEL Special Academic Skills Enrichment Career Awareness program.

- A Teachers for Excellence Council was established, site-wide, and a needs assessment conducted to make the program more responsive to teachers' concerns.

- Students participated in a site-wide voter registration drive; a PUSH-EXCEL Youth Council was established; and an Academic Olympics was being planned for the spring. Other activities included promotion of better attendance; "student of the month"; Athletes for Excellence; Reward Socials; and the Career Exploration Demonstration Project.

In the spring of 1980, under the leadership of a new director, many of the fall activities were discontinued. School needs assessments were conducted by the PUSH-EXCEL staff and an Education Advisory Council was established. Voter registration continued and an Academic Olympics, involving a high level of activity across all target groups, was implemented. An Appreciation Banquet was held during the summer months to honor PUSH-EXCEL supporters.

Program Activities: Fall 1980

All program activities are now based in East High School, with the exception of the Academic Olympics and Honors Awards, in which Central will also participate.

The program concentrated its efforts on developing:

- Sustained student participation through: ninth grade orientation; convocation; pledgee reception; a Career Class offered as part of the school curriculum; and a TOP group, which consists of student organization leaders.

- Improved parent-teacher relations, by holding orientation sessions; parent-teacher conferences in conjunction with report card pickups; and through the school's attendance program.

The community support aspect of the Kansas City program is strong. Donations of time (often by speaking at the Career Classes) and equipment (e.g., typewriters) have been made. A fund raising program is also in progress.

Kansas City EXCEL has the strong support of two churches who participate in the Adopt-A-School program.

Engagement levels. Activities and the associated levels of participation for East High School are depicted in Table 1.6. It shows a number of activities begun in fall 1980. The program is establishing activities that require ongoing involvement. Examples are the career classes, radio broadcasts, and the listening and note taking class. The trade-off appears to be that fewer students are able to participate in these types of activities. Participation is strongest in pledging and one-shot programs targeted toward large audiences, e.g., community fund raisers and report card pickups.

LOS ANGELES

Seven high schools constituted the Los Angeles PUSH-EXCEL program: Crenshaw, Dorsey, Fremont, Jefferson, Jordan, Locke, and Washington. All schools

TABLE 1.6

Level of Participation in Kansas City PUSH-EXCEL Activities for Fall 1980

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS Fall 1980
East High School		
Students	Pledges	792
	Convocation	1,100
	9th Grade Orientation	101
	Leadership Advisory Committee Meeting	25
	Listening & Notetaking Class	25
	Journalism Students for Media Committee	15
	Radio Broadcast	4
	Pledge Reception	123
	Leadership/TOP Group	50
	Career Class I	No data
	Rewards Socials	No data
	Student of the Month	No data
Parents	Pledges	36
	9th Grade Orientation	58
	Parent Orientation	No data
	Report Card Pickup 1	312
	Report Card Pickup 2	87
	Parent Open House	No data
School	Pledges	40
	Teacher/Administration/Staff Orientation	68
	Attendance Committee	10
	Leadership Advisory Committee Meeting	2
	Journalism Students for Media Committee	3
	School Advisory Board	4
Community	Pledges	47
	Fundraising Committee Meeting	5
	Fundraiser	750
	Business Committee Meeting	11

Note: Central and West High Schools have been excluded from this table since formal PUSH-EXCEL programs were discontinued in each for the 1980-81 school year.

TABLE 1.6 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS Fall 1980
Community	Presentation to Human Relations Board-City Hall	4
	Alumni Meeting	15
	Business Luncheon	250
	Xerox Corporation Meeting	42
	Advisory Board Meeting	25
	Thank You Reception	54
	Adoption of PUSH-EXCEL by Local Churches	2
	Xerox Representative Assisting with Newspaper	1
	Media Committee Meeting	2

serve grades 10-12 and have predominantly minority student enrollments. Los Angeles is attempting to revitalize its program in seven of the original nine PUSH-EXCEL schools.

Organization

A major reorganization has taken place in Los Angeles since publication of Report No. 2. Figure 1.7 shows the current structure. Instead of having a parent coordinator and a student coordinator responsible for their constituencies across all participating schools, a community liaison has been assigned to each school. They are to collaborate and share expertise when one's specialty, e.g., parent/student coordinator, media, job development, etc., is needed for the development of programmatic activities in any school. In addition to the seven community liaisons, the Los Angeles program is staffed by an administrative assistant and a research assistant.

All staff are responsible to the acting director and assumed their new responsibilities in late December 1980. Each school is also staffed by two student "motivational engineers," under a CETA grant that began in September 1980. Their duties include collecting pledges and stimulating student involvement in the schools. They are responsible to their respective community liaisons. Four schools have assigned teachers to work on a voluntary basis with the PUSH-EXCEL program.

Program Activities: 1980-81

Report No. 3 indicated that PUSH-EXCEL would concentrate its fall 1980 activities in two schools. Changes in staff and a consequent shift in emphases led to an abrupt change. The Los Angeles program worked in seven schools, with the activities shown in Table 1.7.

Two site-wide activities, Convocation and State-of-the-School addresses, took place in Los Angeles schools during the fall semester.

Engagement levels. Table 1.7 shows Los Angeles PUSH-EXCEL activities and levels of participation for fall 1980. The limited number of activities are attributable to two previously mentioned factors: (1) the disruption in leadership; and (2) the massive reorganiza-

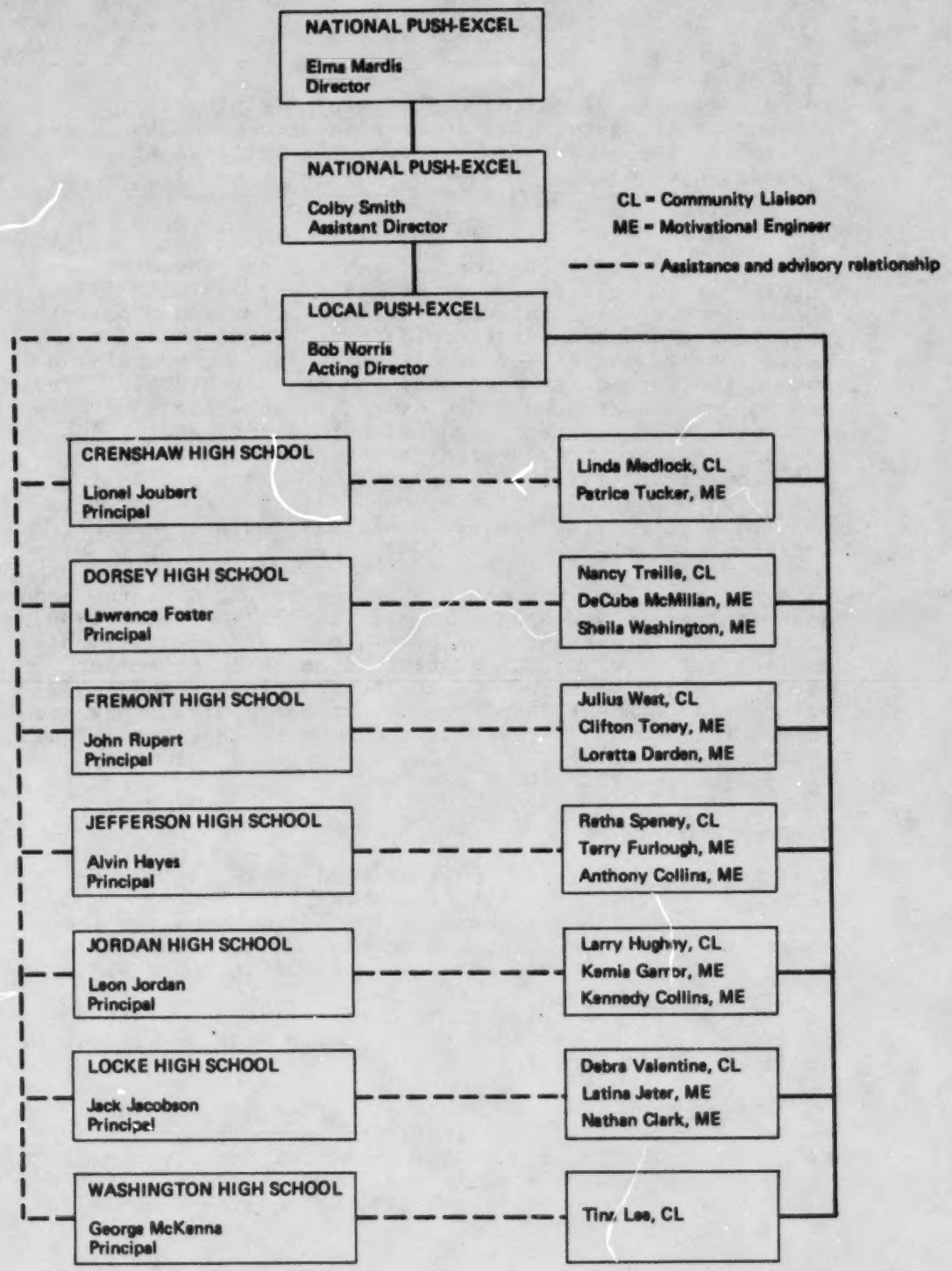

FIGURE 1.7. Los Angeles PUSH-EXCEL Organization Chart

TABLE 1.7

Level of Participation in Los Angeles PUSH-EXCEL Activities by School for Fall 1980

SCHOOL /COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Crenshaw High School		
Students	Pledges/Membership Drive	270
	EXCEL Club	270
	EXCEL (Hall) Sweep Center	Varies
	EXCEL Speaker Series	Schoolwide
	EXCEL Assemblies and Rallies	Schoolwide
	Field Trip to Television and Radio Stations	150
Parents	Parents for Excellence	30
Community	Stakeholders	12
Dorsey High School		
Students	Pledges	147
	PUSH-EXCEL Club	147
	Trip to Television Studio Filming	45
	Motivational Seminar with Impact Educators	80
	World of Work Class (2 Credits)	25
	World of Work Seminars	125
	Speech by Jesse Jackson	Sitewide
School	PUSH Project Bi-Weekly World of Work	1 teacher
Community	Impact Educators	3
Fremont High School		
Students	Pledges	181
	PUSH-EXCEL Club	181

Note: Washington High School has been excluded from this table since it does not presently have a program in-place.

TABLE 1.7 (continued)

SCHOOL/COMPONENT	ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Locke High School		
Students	Pledges	40
Parents	Pledges	46
Jordan High School		
Students	Pledges	127
	PUSH-EXCEL Club	127
	Field Trip to Movie Studio for Filming	80
Parents	Pledges	46
Community	Business Support	No data
Thomas Jefferson High School		
Students	Pledges	165
	PUSH-EXCEL Club	165
	Absentee Awards	25
	2 Field Trips to Radio Station for Filming	60
	Christmas Gifts and Canned Goods Drive, Items Distributed to Needy Families	300
Parents	PUSH for Excellence for Parents	12
	Fundraising	No data
	Chaperones for Field Trips	No data
	Christmas Potluck	No data
School	Christmas Potluck	No data
Community	Churches Providing Support	3
	Supportive Media & Newspapers	6
	Supportive Businesses	4
	Jefferson Compensatory Education Advisory Group	No data

tion of PUSH-EXCEL staff. The two schools which retained PUSH-EXCEL staff continuity -- Crenshaw and Thomas Jefferson -- exhibit greater numbers of activities than those which did not. Dorsey High also instituted a World of Work class, for academic credit, which requires a high level of student involvement.

SUMMARY

The first technical report of the evaluation concluded that PUSH-EXCEl was still more a movement than a program. Since that time, several events have changed the picture somewhat: development of an explicit description of PUSH-EXCEL (the Primer), an Implementation Guide for local programs (still in draft form), training workshops for site directors, and a new site (Buffalo) to test the elaborated implementation guidelines.

These steps occurred, however, after the existing sites had already gotten used to autonony. Because the national staff presence at the sites was minimal during the first demonstration year, the sites designed and implemented activities on their own. The independence this fostered has continued in the current year, and is reflected in the tentative stance local directors have taken toward the national office's development activities. To date, local directors are scrutinizing the Implementation Guide, which now has few new activities of immediate utility to the older programs.

Buffalo stands to benefit immediately from the progress in program development. It used the Guide in the first semester of the program, and from preliminary reports, the start-up was a smooth one. Concurrently with start-up, the staff was anticipating prescribed next steps and working with the national staff to develop appropriate activities. In contrast, other sites have had active kickoffs, only to lose momentum while program activities were designed.

This year, local programs separately tried to reduce the discrepancies between practice and the original "total involvement" concept. Kansas City, a vestigial program last year, poured all of its resources into one school and undertook an aggressive effort to upgrade program activities. Chattanooga and Denver began filling out last year's most conspicious gaps -- activities for

community, parent, and school involvement. Chicago, the most stable site a year ago, decided to shift its focus to a citywide effort. That transition, still underway, has been delayed because of the uncertainty of community funding. Los Angeles has reorganized itself three times over the past 12 months. The most recent step, in November, is to reestablish its former base in the schools.

Overall, the sites continued to conduct special events (e.g., career days, assembly programs) that require minimal commitment and effort on the part of participants. Coordinated sequences of activities are almost invisible, or are of such short duration that they appear so. In this vein, we have observed promising, but episodic activities such as:

- A vocabulary test based on terms presented in one of the Rev. Jackson's speeches.
- An evening study skills workshop for parents.
- A questionnaire on what students learned from a motivational assembly.

The mobilization of parent and community members is still in the early stages, and in only one site -- Chattanooga -- is the involvement strategy an explicit one.

2. The Evaluation

In February 1979, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) began a three-year longitudinal study of the PUSH for Excellence project. The design of the evaluation* was presented in August 1979, after six months of extensive preliminary work: a field study of demonstration programs in Kansas City, Los Angeles, and Chicago;** discussions with PUSH-EXCEL staff, school officials, and other interested parties in business, government, and community organizations; and review of program documentation.

Subsequent evaluation activities have been based on the design, which is incremental: Results achieved by the program are examined in six month cycles; the findings are fed back to the program and its stakeholders via technical reports; and the program's subsequent plans are reviewed and incorporated into a design for the next cycle of the evaluation.

THE INDICATORS

Impact measures -- indicators of the extent to which program goals are or are not occurring -- are divided into three broad classes:

- Indicators of Attention. As PUSH-EXCEL's own rhetoric points out, the first step in getting results is to get "attention." We borrowed this word to describe the first set of behaviors or events to be measured. This consists of those outcomes that are unambiguously attributable to PUSH-EXCEL efforts and,

*National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project: Phase I; Evaluation Design. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, September 1979.

**National Evaluation of the PUSH for Excellence Project: Phase I; Program Descriptions. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1979.

therefore, most directly within the control of the program. Technical Report 2: Implementation examined the program's progress on these indicators.

- Intermediate Outcomes. Intermediate outcomes embrace some very important, meaningful events. Some of the effects we describe under the label "involvement." Others we group under "formative investment," student behaviors (e.g., going to school everyday, doing homework) that are preconditions for the spontaneous, self-perpetuating, future-oriented behaviors that the program eventually wants to elicit.

- Indicators of Impact. We reserve "impacts" to refer to the more ultimate, long-term effects that stimulated the program. We group them under the program goals -- motivation, atmosphere, opportunity, responsibility, and achievement -- and a sixth construct, investment. This is defined as any voluntary expenditure of time, effort, or money to pursue legitimate opportunities, in hopes of a future return.

The findings to be presented in the next two chapters are drawn from analyses of baseline data on the intermediate outcome and impact indicators.

THE STUDENT SAMPLES

We are conducting individual interviews with a cross-section of students in each of these schools:

Alton Park Junior High School, Chattanooga
Howard High School, Chattanooga
Riverside High School, Chattanooga
Cole Junior High School, Denver
East High School, Denver
Manual High School, Denver

The students, who were in the 8th or 10th grade last year, are designated as the intensive sample.

Students were interviewed once during spring 1980. A second cycle of interviews was completed in December 1980, and a final cycle is currently underway. Also, a sample of students at Manley High School in Chicago was interviewed last spring. However, because the level of program implementation in the Chicago schools was minimal in fall 1980, NIE and AIR decided jointly to collect no further information on these students.

A structured self-report questionnaire was administered in spring 1980 to a second cross-section of 10th graders in each of the following schools:

Kirkman High School, Chattanooga
Chicago Vocational High School
Central High School, Kansas City
East High School, Kansas City
West High School, Kansas City

The students in these schools constitute the standard sample.

Current plans call for a second administration of the questionnaire in spring 1981. Only one school, Kirkman High School, will be included. Chicago Vocational High School will be omitted because the program is conducting very few activities at the school. Central and West High Schools (Kansas City) are no longer in the program. Irregularities in AIR's data collection at East High School (Kansas City) resulted in an inadequate sample size; hence the questionnaire will not be administered there.

The two types of samples serve different purposes. The standard sample serves as a focal point for assessing the extent of program coverage and the degree of program impact on outcomes, such as school climate, which presumably affect the entire student population. The intensive sample is included to provide detailed data on the entire range of program outcomes, including those related to parental involvement. The number of students to be interviewed represents the upper limit that can be accommodated with corresponding parental interviews, within the existing resources for the evaluation. We are gathering archival data for each intensive and standard student on basic impact measures (attendance, grades and test scores, delinquent behavior, etc.).

Sample Selection

Plans called for a random sample of 100 students per school. However, parental consent had to be granted for students to participate in the evaluation. The sampling procedures were constrained, therefore, by the anticipated difficulties in obtaining parental permissions for the desired sample sizes.

Chattanooga. The schools from which intensive samples would be drawn had 8th or 10th grade populations of 250 students or less. It was decided that permissions would be requested for all students in the target grades. The response was extremely low (approximately 50 of 550 requests mailed). Follow-up consisted of a second mailing of a simplified request letter. This was accompanied by briefings to students on the evaluation and reminders by homeroom teachers to students to return signed permissions. This procedure yielded only a slight increment in the initial response rate. The third step was to telephone parents, and finally, on-site data collectors went door-to-door to make in-person requests.

At the standard school (Kirkman), requests were mailed to all 375 10th grade parents. Follow-up procedures were identical to those for the intensive schools with the exception of door-to-door requests.

The following shows the baseline sample sizes for each school:

	Size of Sample	% of 8th or 10th Grade Class
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	45	24
Kirkman H.S.	63	17
Howard H.S.	85	34
Riverside H.S.	20	15

Chicago. The Department of Data Processing of the Chicago Public Schools produced a simple random sample of 250 10th graders for each of the two schools in the evaluation. Permission forms were mailed to parents of each student on the list.

The initial response rate for Manley parents was extremely low (13 of 250). Follow-up to gain additional permissions consisted of three mailouts of a revised and

shortened consent form, phone calls, and distribution of consent forms at a parent open-house. Also, the principal talked to students about the evaluation and the need for parental permissions.

At the Chicago Vocational High School, the initial mailout was to parents of students in the random sample; 61 permissions were obtained. Subsequently, school counselors asked students to bring in signed forms, a second mailout was conducted, and permissions were distributed to one of the 10th grade classes.

Baseline samples size were as follows:

	Size of Sample	% of 8th or 10th Grade Class
Chicago Vocational H.S.	99	8
Manley H.S.	72	11

Denver. The Denver Public Schools gave AIR a list of IDs for the 8th and 10th grade classes at the three schools in the evaluation. From the 10th grade lists, stratified random samples of 250 students were drawn. The stratification cells were based on the racial/ethnic breakdown of the class populations. Permission letters were sent to parents of students in the samples. Because there were only 240 students in the 8th grade class, a sample was not selected. Letters were sent to parents of all 8th graders.

Follow-up on the initial letter of permission consisted of phone calls. This procedure yielded fewer than 150 10th grade students per school. The 10th grade permission request samples were augmented by 125 at Manual and 200 at East (both figures constituted virtually the remainder of the 10th grade population). Letters of permission were mailed, followed by phone calls to parents who did not respond.

The following shows the baseline sample sizes for each school:

	Size of Sample	% of 8th or 10th Grade Class
Cole Jr. H.S.	88	37
East H.S.	109	18
Manual H.S.	77	20

Table 2.1 shows the breakdown of students by race and sex, for samples in Denver and the other sites.

PARENT AND TEACHER SAMPLES

Parents of students in the intensive sample were interviewed if they had agreed to participate in the evaluation, and if interviews could be scheduled. Sample sizes were as follows:

	Number of Parents
Alton Park Jr. H.S., Chattanooga	28
Howard H.S., Chattanooga	77
Riverside H.S., Chattanooga	9
Manley H.S., Chicago	44
Cole Jr. H.S., Denver	38
East H.S., Denver	54
Manual H.S., Denver	33

Twelve to 15 teachers in each school comprised the teacher interview samples. Stratified random samples of ten teachers were selected in each Denver school. In the other sites, simple random samples of ten teachers per school were selected. Each principal was asked to augment the ten randomly chosen teachers with a judgmental sample of five.

Parents and teachers will be interviewed once more during the spring 1981 data collection cycle.

TABLE 2.1

Student Samples by Race and Sex

	Percentages						
	RACE					SEX	
	Black	White	Native American	Oriental	Hispanic	Male	Female
Chattanooga							
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	87	13	0	0	0	40	60
Howard H.S. (n=85)	99	0	0	1	0	54	46
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	71	29	0	0	0	37	63
Riverside H.S. (n=20)	90	10	0	0	0	50	50
Chicago							
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=98)	100	0	0	0	0	58	42
Manley H.S. (n=72)	100	0	0	0	0	38	62
Denver							
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	26	62	1	5	6	53	47
East H.S. (n=108)	42	46	0	4	8	45	55
Manual H.S. (n=77)	17	75	0	4	4	51	49

INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

Students in the intensive sample were interviewed individually during regular school hours. To maintain confidentiality, interviewers recorded student IDs, and not names, on the interview instrument (Exhibit B.1). Names were recorded on separate 2x3 cards, which were given to the students when the interview was over. The first cycle of interviews was conducted between February and early May 1980, and the fall 1980 interviews were conducted between September 1980 and early February. The student questionnaire (Exhibit B.2) was administered in group sessions during April and May 1980.

Parents were interviewed in their homes. Interviews began in May 1980 and continued through August 1980. The interview protocol is shown in Exhibit B.3.

Teacher interviews were conducted individually during the school day. The interviews took place in May and June 1980. Exhibit B.4 shows the interview instrument.

PART TWO:

The Baseline State of Affairs

Before a program is in place, evaluators typically collect information about the state of affairs that the program wants to change. These data are later used as a "baseline" to establish how much, if any, impact the program has made.

The chapters in this section present analyses of the baseline data for the PUSH-EXCEL evaluation. We consider five categories of indicators. In Chapter 3, we take up atmosphere and opportunity in the school and beyond; and in Chapter 4, students' aspirations, expectations about the future, and efforts to achieve. Findings for the following schools are discussed:

Alton Park Jr. H.S., Chattanooga
Howard H.S., Chattanooga
Kirkman H.S., Chattanooga
Riverside H.S., Chattanooga
Chicago Vocational H.S.
Manley H.S., Chicago
Cole Jr. H.S., Denver
East H.S., Denver
Manual H.S., Denver

The purpose of the analysis is to provide PUSH-EXCEL with information that it can use for program development. The analytic strategy was to construct cross-tabulations and frequency distributions, using PUSH-EXCEL's assumptions about the problems, to formulate appropriate questions. In effect, we asked, "Are PUSH-EXCEL's assumptions realistic?"

As Chapter 2 described, interview data were collected in spring 1980. This was during the second semester of the first demonstration year. However, as previous technical reports indicated, the program had not developed far beyond start-up activities. Thus, we consider these data from spring 1980 as the baseline.

3. Atmosphere and Opportunity

Improving atmosphere -- the environment for learning -- is one of PUSH-EXCEL's major goals, and typically the first target of change in a local program's initial stages. The program insists that higher achievement can take place only when certain conditions exist:

- discipline and order in the school building;
- high levels of school attendance and persistence in staying in school;
- high expectations for student achievement; and
- active parental support of student's achievement efforts.

PUSH-EXCEL considers one other condition -- opportunity -- so vital that the program has given it the status of a goal. Opportunity refers first to the resource base that supports learning and other efforts, and second, to the life chances that make striving worthwhile. In the following discussion, we consider opportunity as an aspect of atmosphere.

The indicators of atmosphere fall into four categories: schoolwide, including attendance, suspension, and drop-out rates; teacher perceptions of the school climate; student perceptions of the school atmosphere; and the learning atmosphere outside the school. We consider each in turn.

SCHOOLWIDE INDICATORS

PUSH-EXCEL views high rates of absenteeism, dropouts, and disciplinary actions as indicators of an unhealthy school atmosphere. According to the rationale: If the atmosphere is one in which student efforts are en-

couraged and rewarded, and standards of conduct are high, communicated frequently, and enforced consistently, then students will come to school, obey the rules once they get there, and stay in school until graduation.

What was the status of the schools on the three basic indicators? For each one, we discuss the data for the first demonstration year, 1979-1980, and the two preceding years.

Absences

Table 3.1 shows the average daily absentee rate for each of the ten schools in the sample. In all but one of the Chattanooga schools (Kirkman), last year's absentee rates were above ten percent. Since 1977-78 Kirkman and Riverside rates have decreased, and at Alton and Howard, the rates increased from 1977-78 to 1978-79, and improved from 1978-79 to 1979-80.

The two Chicago schools differed last year by ten points. Chicago Vocational's 11 percent rate represents an increase over the rates of the two previous years. At Manley, where nearly 30 percent of the school was absent each day in 1977-78, the rate of absences had declined to about 20 percent in 1979-80.

In Denver,* the rates of absences in all the schools were slightly lower in October 1980-81 than they were during the same period one year ago. Cole and East have been at roughly 10 and 15 percent respectively since 1977-78. At Manual the 15 percent rates shown for 1977-78 and 1978-79 had dropped to approximately 12 percent by 1979-80.

At East H.S. in Kansas City, the percentage of absences had increased from about 16, in 1977-78, to nearly 20 last year. The school reports, however, that this year their attendance program focuses on the absences of failing students. Using this strategy, absences during the first six weeks decreased by slightly over 30 percent from last year; the second six weeks' rate improved 27 percent; and, as of the end of the second six-week period, overall 1980-81 absences have declined by 29 percent over last year's rate.

*Denver calculates attendance on the basis of average daily rates for October of each year.

TABLE 3.1
Average Daily Absences

	Percentages			
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80*	1980-81
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	11.3	12.9	11.7	--
Howard H.S.	16.3	17.6	15.9	--
Kirkman H.S.	12.0	9.0	8.1	--
Riverside H.S.	20.3	15.4	13.8	--
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S.	9.7	8.8	11.0	--
Manley H.S.	29.4	23.0	20.5	--
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S.	10.4	10.8	10.1	9.6
East H.S.	15.5	14.4	15.5	15.2
Manual H.S.	15.0	15.0	12.3	12.1
Kansas City				
East H.S.	16.6	17.1	19.8	--

*1979-80 was the first year of the demonstration.

**Denver calculates % of attendance on basis of daily attendance for October of each school year, hence data for the current year are already available. Other sites compile the data at the end of the school year.

Dropouts

As shown in Table 3.2, the drop-out rates range from one percent (Alton Park Jr. H.S., Chattanooga) to nearly 20 percent (East H.S., Kansas City). Also, there is variation within sites and in each school from year to year.

In Chattanooga, rates for Alton Park and Kirkman have decreased over the past three years. These two schools show the smallest figures in the sites. Drop-out rates at Howard have remained approximately the same (12%). Riverside dropped from a nearly 20 percent rate in 1977-78 to roughly 16 percent in 1978-79, and rose to 18 percent in 1979-80.

In Chicago,* Chicago Vocational showed a decrease of four points in 1979-80 from the 1978-79 rate of 9. Manley's rate increased in 1979-80 to 13. This was six points above the rate for the previous year.

In Denver, East showed yearly decreases; in 1977-78 the rate was 14; by 1979-80 it was at nine percent. Manual H.S., with a rate of seven in 1979-80, had increased slightly (1 point) from the previous year. The rate was highest (at 8%) in 1977-78.

East H.S. in Kansas City last year had the highest rate (20%) of all the schools. The 1979-80 figure is over two and a half times as great as the 1978-79 rate. Compared to all high schools in Kansas City, East stood first last year.

Pupil Suspensions

One or more actions may be taken to discipline students who are disruptive in class or who otherwise violate school rules. Some are extremely rare: exclusion (expulsions), corporal punishment, court referral, disciplinary hearings, and after-school detention. The districts in which the sample schools are located either do not routinely collect data on these actions or prohibit access to protect student confidentiality.

Suspension is one of the most common actions, and all the schools report figures on an annual basis. The rates for 1977-78 through 1979-80 are shown in Table 3.3.

*Data were not available for 1977-78.

TABLE 3.2
Dropouts

	Percentages		
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	3.3(514)	2.5(520)	1.4(505)
Howard H.S.	11.7(668)	11.5(602)	12.1(572)
Kirkman H.S.	8.6(970)	8.2(955)	7.3(874)
Riverside H.S.	19.1(428)	15.9(390)	18.5(370)
Chicago			
Chicago Vocational H.S.	***	9.1	5.1
Manley H.S.	***	7.4	13.4
Denver *			
Cole Jr. H.S.			
East H.S.	13.9(1936)	10.5(1821)	9.0(1813)
Manual H.S.	7.5(1416)	5.7(1296)	6.5(1212)
Kansas City			
East H.S. **	9.3(1491)	7.4(1426)	19.6(1272)

Note: The membership on which the percentages are based are shown in parentheses.

* Calculated on the 5th Friday of the new school year for the past year. The year runs from October 1st of one year through October 1st of the following year.

** Dropouts in Kansas City are defined as students who quit school between July of one year and June of the following year, before completion of the prescribed program for graduation.

TABLE 3.3
Pupil Suspensions

	Percentages		
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80*
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	5.5	7.8	14.4
Howard H.S.	**	22.0	22.9
Kirkman H.S.	11.8	13.6	14.4
Riverside H.S.	25.5	22.0	5.4
Chicago			
Chicago Vocational H.S.	6.2	9.6	5.3
Manley H.S.	20.8	8.1	14.9
Denver***			
Cole Jr. H.S.	18.5	15.7	18.0
East H.S.	12.1	8.9	6.9
Manual H.S.	6.3	10.7	7.2
Kansas City			
East H.S.	3.6	4.9	2.3

*1979-80 was the first year of the demonstration.

**Data not reported

***Percentages were computed by AIR using raw data supplied by Denver Public Schools.

Of all the sites, Kansas City showed the lowest rate last year. There, the 1979-80 rate for East H.S. represents a decrease from the previous year. Among Chattanooga, Chicago and Denver, with-in site variation is considerable. In Chattanooga, 1979-80 rates ranged from five percent at Riverside to over 22 percent at Howard. The Riverside rate represents a sharp decrease from previous years, whereas rates had been climbing for the two previous years at the other schools.

At Chicago Vocational, the 1979-80 rates represent the lowest of the three years. At Manley, where the 1979-80 rate was triple that of Chicago Vocational, suspensions last year were up from 1978-79, but lower than the 20 percent rate of 1977-78.

Among the Denver schools, Cole Jr. H.S. had the highest rate last year. At 18 percent, it was more than double that of the two senior high schools, and had increased from the 1978-79 school year. The rates at East and Manual were lower in 1979-80 than they were in 1978-79.

Summary and Discussion

On all schoolwide indicators of atmosphere, and in virtually all the schools except those in Denver, the problems that PUSH-EXCEL has identified may be found. In part this reflects selection factors. The Chattanooga schools, for example, were chosen as PUSH-EXCEL components because their schoolwide rates of attendance and disciplinary actions were poor in comparison to those of schools in the city. Kansas City used a similar set of criteria.

Compared to the other schools in the sample, Denver schools generally showed fewer problems in two of the three areas, suspensions and dropouts.

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS

PUSH-EXCEL recognizes the role of teachers as primary transferrers of knowledge to and motivators of students. If teachers feel that: (1) students are interested in learning and can achieve; (2) parents are supportive of their efforts; (3) their colleagues are talented and dedicated; and (4) they can affect the

school and its students, then the climate in which they work is conducive to eliciting both their best efforts and the best efforts of the students. Below we discuss teachers perceptions of each of these components of atmosphere for the first demonstration year, 1979-80.

Descriptions of Students

Teacher descriptions fall into three categories: positive, mixed, and negative. The responses shown below vary by school as well as by site. Overall, slightly more than 12 percent of the teachers described their students in positive terms and 42 percent of their descriptions were mixed.

	Percentages			
	Positive	Mixed	Negative	No Answer
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	0	33.3	50.0	16.7
Howard H.S. (n=14)	7.1	21.4	35.7	35.7
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	0	33.3	60.0	6.7
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=7)	57.1	42.9	0	0
Manley H.S. (n=15)	26.1	60.0	13.3	0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=13)	7.7	53.8	15.4	23.0
East H.S. (n=15)	6.7	46.7	0	46.7
Manual H.S. (n=13)	15.4	46.2	15.4	23.1
All Schools (n=104)	12.5	42.3	25.0	20.2

In Chattanooga, teachers described their students largely in lukewarm (mixed) and negative terms. In the words of one Chattanooga teacher:

> In general, the students have low motivation, lack of social skills. They'd probably get an A on street knowledge. They have an enormous need for attention and affection. Often described as lazy, but I don't think that's it. They don't know what they're supposed to get out of school.

In only one of three schools, Howard, was any positive response received. It was the only Chattanooga school in which less than half (approximately 36 percent) of the teachers' perceptions toward students were negative. The corresponding percentages for negative responses were 50 at Alton Park and 60 at Riverside.

Chicago teachers viewed their students in much more positive terms. There were no negative perceptions at Chicago Vocational where teacher perceptions were positive at 57 percent. At Manley, roughly 26 percent positive responses were reported while most (60 percent) were moderate. Only 13 percent were negative.

In all Denver schools, 46 percent (at Manual), or more (47% at East and 54% at Cole) of the teachers' perceptions of students were mixed. Few teachers were positive or negative and Denver is the only site in which more than 20 percent of the teachers in each school consistently failed to respond to this aspect of the question.

Teacher Perceptions of Parents

The table below shows the percentages of teacher responses describing students' parents. The responses were coded as positive, mixed, or negative.

	Percentages			
	Positive	Mixed	Negative	No Answer
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	0	8.3	16.7	75.0
Howard H.S. (n=14)	0	0	14.3	85.7
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	0	0	40.0	60.0
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=7)	0	28.6	0	71.4
Manley H.S. (n=15)	6.7	13.3	80.0	0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=13)	0	15.4	0	84.6
East H.S. (n=15)	0	6.7	0	93.3
Manual H.S. (n=13)	0	15.4	15.4	69.2
All Schools (n=104)	1.0	7.7	13.5	77.9

Most teachers, 78 percent, did not articulate their perceptions of parents. The majority of responses received were mixed (8%) to negative (14%). Parents were not perceived as being supportive of teachers and their efforts. For example, one teacher felt that parents were not supportive of disciplinary actions taken at the school, and another felt that parents did not have the educational backgrounds that would enable them to help their children. The positive responses simply acknowledged that parents were concerned that their children learn. The interpretation of these responses must be tempered by the fact that a large portion of the sample did not respond to this aspect of the question.

Perceptions of Colleagues

Teacher perceptions of other teachers in their school are shown in the following table. Across sites the teachers were mixed and roughly ten percent responded positively. Approximately 15 percent of the teachers gave their peers negative ratings and 41 percent of the teachers did not address their perceptions of peers.

	Percentages			
	Positive	Mixed	Negative	No Answer
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	8.3	25.0	16.7	50.0
Howard H.S. (n=14)	0	21.4	35.7	35.7
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	46.7	20.0	6.7	6.7
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=7)	14.3	14.3	0	71.4
Manley H.S. (n=15)	46.7	6.7	46.7	0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=13)	7.7	46.2	30.8	15.4
East H.S. (n=15)	0	40.0	0	60.0
Manual H.S. (n=13)	0	23.1	23.1	53.8
All Schools (n=104)	9.6	33.7	15.4	41.3

In Chattanooga, teachers at Riverside have the most positive perceptions of each other: 47 percent positive and 20 percent mixed. Alton Park teachers are less positive, eight percent positive and 25 percent mixed, and the response rate has dropped to 50 percent. Howard teachers are more mixed (21%) to negative (36%) in terms of their perceptions of each other.

In Chicago's Manley High, the teachers are split, half positive and negative with only one mixed response. At Chicago Vocational, five of the seven teachers did not respond to the issue and one teacher each felt positive and mixed.

Teachers at Cole Jr. High in Denver had the most positive peer perceptions, eight percent, with 46 percent feeling medium and only 31 percent rating their peers negatively on this dimension. At neither East nor Manual were positive perceptions reported. However, at these schools less than half of the respondents addressed this aspect of the question. And, at East, the remaining 40 percent gave a medium rating, while at Manual the remaining 46 percent were evenly split between medium and negative.

Views on the Climate for Learning

Teachers were asked to comment, in general terms, on school climate. The responses fell into three categories describing the school climate as conducive to learning, not conducive to learning, or somewhere in between. The percentages of teacher responses in each of these categories are shown below.

	Percentages			
	Conducive to Learning	Mixed	Not Conducive to Learning	No Answer
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	0	41.7	41.7	16.7
Howard H.S. (n=14)	7.1	35.7	42.7	14.3
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	0	60.0	33.3	6.7
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=7)	85.7	14.3	0	0
Manley H.S. (n=15)	0	33.3	36.7	40.0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=13)	0	53.8	23.0	23.0
East H.S. (n=15)	0	66.7	20.0	13.3
Manual H.S. (n=13)	15.4	38.5	7.7	38.5
All Schools (n=104)	8.7	45.2	26.0	20.2

Responses on this item were directed toward various aspects of school climate. Some teachers responded in terms of school spirit, others to levels of racial tension and still others to the availability of equipment and materials. Overall, most teachers (45%) felt that their school's climate was mixed.

Chicago Vocational School stands out in all sites as the school rated highest on climate. It is also the only school in which all teachers addressed this concern. None of the schools received an overwhelming indictment that their school climates were not conducive to learning, though two Chattanooga schools -- Alton Park and Howard -- elicited negative responses most of the time, 42 percent and 43 percent, respectively. The majority of Riverside responses, 60 percent, was mixed. Cole and East, in Denver, received no positive ratings, though most were mixed, 54 percent and 67 percent, respectively. Of the teachers interviewed, 15 percent found Manual's climate conducive to learning and 39 percent felt that it was mixed, with an equal percentage not responding.

Teacher Perceptions of Their Own Efficacy

In order to determine teachers' feelings of efficacy, they were asked, "Do you feel that you can make a contribution to this school and its students?" They were also urged to elaborate on the effects that they had on students and their role in decisionmaking in school-related affairs, e.g., in school policy formation. Teacher responses to both of these questions are shown below:

Percentages of Responses

	Effects on Students				Role in Decisionmaking about School-Related Affairs and School Policy Formation			
	Effect	No Effect	Ambivalent	No Responses	Role	No Role	Ambivalent	No Response
Chattanooga								
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	91.6	0	8.3	0	41.6	16.6	8.3	33.3
Howard H.S. (n=15)	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	80.0	0	13.3	6.6	40.0	53.3	6.7	0
Chicago								
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=7)	100.0	0	0	0	42.8	0	0	57.1
Manley H.S. (n=15)	86.6	0	6.6	6.6	26.6	20.0	0	53.3
Denver								
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=13)	92.3	0	0	7.6	53.8	46.1	0	0
East H.S. (n=15)	86.7	0	0	13.3	33.3	33.3	0	33.3
Manual H.S. (n=13)	76.9	0	0	15.3	38.4	53.8	7.6	0

Better than 75 percent at every school felt that they had an effect, with few ambivalent or nonresponses. There were no negative responses. Most teachers felt that their relationship with a student was their key to success. Sample responses were:

> I like to feel I have a positive effect. This is my reward to have an effect on these students.... If these students don't have teachers who care they won't make it.

> I feel that I have made and can make a contribution. I listen to my students. . . and most students can relate to me.

> I've established a lot of rapport. A kid responds to you if he understands and respects you.

Teachers were in general agreement on their effect on students. However, teachers' perceived roles in school-related decisionmaking varied by school, though few felt ambivalent about their role in decisionmaking.

In Chattanooga, 40 percent of the teachers at Riverside and 42 percent at Alton Park responded that they played a role in school-related decisions, while none of the teachers at Howard addressed this issue. In addition, at Riverside 53 percent of the respondents indicated that they had no role in decisionmaking.

At Chicago Vocational School, all of the teachers who responded, 43 percent, felt that they had a role in decisionmaking. At Manley, 47 percent responded. Twenty-seven percent felt that they had a role. The remaining 20 percent did not feel that they played a role in school policy formation.

Each of the Denver schools exhibits a unique pattern of response on role efficacy. At Cole, 54 percent of the teachers responded that they were able to influence school policy decisions and the remaining 46 percent felt that they could not. One third of East's teachers felt that they could influence decisions; another third felt that they could not influence decisions; and the

remaining third did not respond. At Manual, 38 percent of the teachers felt that they play a role in school-related decisions, while 54 percent felt that they do not.

Summary and Discussion

Teacher descriptions of the school, the parents, and students must be viewed with caution because of the high degree of selectivity of response. While all the teachers commented on one or two aspects of the question, very few responded to all probes. With this in mind, the findings may be summarized briefly as follows: Teachers described students in mixed or negative terms. Similarly, the perceptions of parents, colleagues, and the overall climate for learning were negatively toned or mixed.

These perceptions can be read either as accurate reflections of reality in the schools or as indications that teachers have high standards that the schools -- no matter how "good" on objective dimensions -- fail to meet. The schoolwide data presented earlier in the chapter, along with the achievement scores presented in Chapter 2, suggest that for Chattanooga and Manley in Chicago, the first reading is a plausible characterization. On the average, students do not do well academically, drop-out rates are high, and attendance is a problem. The second interpretation may be applied in Denver, where average achievement levels are above citywide and national averages, and dropouts and suspensions are relatively low.

When asked about their own ability to have an effect on students, teachers' responses were overwhelmingly positive. On the issue of their efficacy in making contributions to the schools, teachers expressed little ambivalence. However, the extent of efficacy varied from school to school.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS AND NORMS

PUSH-EXCEL views student attitudes toward the school and achievement as important components of the climate for learning. The program would rate a school positively if interest in courses was high, if students generally felt good about the school, and if students collectively

valued achievement and high standards of conduct. The following paragraphs present the baseline data on each of these dimensions.

School and Courses

Students were asked to rate their schools on ten dimensions: school pride; school spirit; participation of parents; participation of community people; school building and facilities; courses offered; principals' interest in the school; cooperation among students, teachers, and principals; students' enthusiasm for learning; and cleanliness of the school grounds. The values of response categories were: very high (1), high (2), average (3), low (4), and very low (5). A school environment score was computed by summing scores across items, and taking the average. School scores, then, represent the students' overall perception of the school in terms of the ten features named above.

The table below shows the mean, median, and range of school environment scores, across sites. The mean scores ranged from 2.1 (Riverside in Chattanooga) to 2.9 (Manley in Chicago) and actual scores ranged from 1.1 to 4.3. No student rated school environment very low, and the composite school environment means were relatively high (2.1) to just above average (2.9).

	School Ratings		
	Mean	Median	Range
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	2.4	2.4	1.1-3.6
Howard H.S. (n=85)	2.5	2.5	1.3-3.8
Kirkman H.S. (n=58)	2.7	2.6	1.6-4.0
Riverside H.S. (n=20)	2.1	1.9	1.3-3.3
Chicago			
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=89)	2.4	2.3	1.3-4.0
Manley H.S. (n=65)	2.9	2.9	1.8-3.9
Denver			
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=75)	2.7	2.8	1.6-3.8
East H.S. (n=95)	2.6	2.6	1.6-4.3
Manual H.S. (n=64)	2.7	2.7	1.8-4.2

Interest in courses was high among students in all the schools. As Table 3.4 shows, the majority of responses fell into the "very or quite interesting" category.

Ethos

We use the term ethos to describe peer norms for valued behavior and personal traits. The questions tapping ethos were as follows:

- Different kinds of students are popular in different levels of schools. What does it take to be popular in this school?
- Are there certain types of students who tend to have high status or be looked up to?
- Are there (other) types of students who tend to be looked down on?

The open-ended responses were coded into categories, as described below.

Popularity. Table 3.5 shows the percentage of responses in each category, by school, of traits that make students popular. At Alton Park in Chattanooga, academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities were mentioned most frequently (36% for each category). The second most common popularity determinants were good citizenship and involvement in athletics, each cited by 26 percent of the students. At Howard and Riverside, students involved in athletics were the overwhelming favorites, mentioned 51 percent and 43 percent of the time, respectively. Second on the list for Howard students was academic achievement. Thirty-six percent of Riverside students cited as second choices the following characteristics: (1) involvement in extracurricular activities; (2) having a positive personality; and (3) having lots of friends. At Riverside, academic achievers received mentions only 29 percent of the time, and attractive students and troublemakers were perceived as positive characteristics by 21 percent, each, of the respondents.

TABLE 3.4
Interest in Courses

	Percentages			
	Very or Quite Interesting	Fairly Interesting	Slightly Interesting	Very Uninteresting
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	80	7	13	0
Howard H.S. (n=84)	73	13	11	2
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	53	39	7	2
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	82	18	0	0
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=97)	56	37	7	0
Manley H.S. (n=72)	66	28	3	4
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	57	35	6	2
East H.S. (n=109)	67	26	6	1
Manual H.S. (n=77)	57	35	5	3

TABLE 3.5
Traits Making Students Popular

Percent of Cases

	Troublemaker	Stays out of Trouble	Academic Achiever	Good Citizenship	Athletic	Not Athletic	Extracurricular Activities	Not Active in Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking	Positive Personality	Negative Personality	Attractive	Unattractive	Lots of Friends	Few Friends	Be yourself	Nothing	Socioeconomic	Teachers Pet	Senior/Upper Class	Academic Undergraduates	Lower Classmen	Handicapped
Chattanooga																						
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=39)	15	0	36	26	26	0	36	0	15	8	8	5	18	3	0	10	0					
Howard H.S. (n=67)	0	0	25	6	51	0	6	0	18	2	12	0	12	0	6	3	0					
Riverside H.S. (n=14)	21	14	29	0	43	0	36	0	36	0	21	0	36	0	0	7	0					
Chicago																						
Manley H.S. (n=62)	2	0	31	13	52	0	23	0	16	0	21	0	18	2	7	3	0					
Denver																						
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=84)	20	5	10	6	4	0	7	5	45	10	27	1	29	1	0	1	0					
East H.S.(n=104)	6	4	14	2	31	0	20	1	49	10	21	0	30	0	7	3	0					
Manual H.S. (n=76)	4	0	16	7	24	1	15	3	53	0	20	1	32	1	8	0	0					

At Chicago's Manley High, athletes were mentioned 52 percent of the time as possessing traits leading to popularity. Thirty-one percent mentioned academic achievers. Persons involved in extracurricular activities and attractive persons were mentioned in 23 percent and 21 percent of the cases, respectively. Athletic high school students in both Chicago and Chattanooga are most likely to be popular.

Denver students most often cited a positive personality as a trait leading to popularity, 45 percent in Cole, 49 percent in East, and 53 percent in Manual. At Cole Jr. High, having lots of friends, 29 percent, and being attractive, 27 percent, were second and third. At East, athletes were mentioned in 31 percent of the cases and having lots of friends was cited in 30 percent. At Manual, these two were reversed; having lots of friends was mentioned in 32 percent of the cases and athletes in 24 percent.

High status determinants. The traits that give students status are shown in Table 3.6. In Chattanooga, Alton Park students perceived academic achievers (44%) and athletes (28%) as students with high status. The overwhelming status symbol for Howard students, in 79 percent of the cases, was athletic involvement. This was also mentioned first at Riverside, in 46 percent of cases, but academic achievers were a close second at 36 percent.

Manley, in Chicago was similar to Riverside in the status accorded athletes, who were mentioned in 75 percent of the cases. Academic achievers were a poor second, mentioned in 25 percent of the cases.

Having a positive personality was not the main trait contributing to status in Denver schools, as might be expected from the question on popularity. Cole's academic achievers moved into first place and were cited in 34 percent of the cases. Being attractive was second, mentioned in 28 percent of the cases. Having a positive personality and having a lot of friends was tied for third, mentioned in 26 percent of the cases. At East, academic achievers were cited more often, in 48 percent of the cases, with athletes, 36 percent, and persons involved in extracurricular activities, 24 percent, second and third. At Manual, athletes were mentioned most often as having traits granting status (48 percent) with academic achievement a close second (47 percent) and

TABLE 3.6
Traits Giving Students Status

Percent of Cases

	Troublemaker	Stays out of Trouble	Academic Achiever	Good Citizenship	Athletic	Not Athletic	Extracurricular Activities	Not Active in Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking	Positive Personality	Negative Personality	Attractive	Unattractive	Lots of Friends	Few Friends	Be yourself	Nothing	Socioeconomic	Teachers Pet	Senior/Upper Class	Academic Undergraduates	Lower Classmen	Handicapped	General
Chattanooga																							
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=25)	12	4	44	12	28	0	12	0	8	4	12	0	8		0			0					0
Howard H.S. (n=19)	5	0	16	5	79	0	26	0	5	0	5	0	0		5			0					0
Riverside H.S. (n=11)	0	27	36	9	46	0	27	0	27	9	9	0	27		0			0					0
Chicago																							
Manley H.S. (n=44)	5		25	2	75	0	7	0	5	5	5	0	2		0			0					0
Denver																							
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=53)	23	4	34	11	9	0	13	0	26	8	28	0	26		0			2					4
East H.S. (n=88)	5	0	48	2	36	0	24	0	14	2	17	0	16		0			0					0
Manual H.S. (n=58)	0	0	47	9	48	0	16	0	21		7	0	21		3			0					0

a positive personality sharing a poor third place with having lots of friends (21 percent).

Low Status Determinants. The percentages of responses given on traits that give students low status are shown in Table 3.7. Response patterns once again vary for Chattanooga schools. Alton Park students mentioned academic underachievers first (50%), troublemakers second (42%), and negative personality third (29%). Howard students cited academic underachievers and physically unattractive students as equally low status types. Having a negative personality, mentioned in 36 percent of the cases, was the only other trait frequently mentioned. Riverside students cited a negative personality in 57 percent of the cases as a trait contributing to low status. Academic underachievers and troublemakers were each mentioned in 29 percent of the cases.

In Chicago, Manley students most often cited a negative personality, 39 percent of the cases, as a low status trait; followed by academic underachievers and troublemakers, respectively cited in 36 percent and 21 percent of the cases.

All Denver students agreed on the most often cited low status trait, academic underachievement. Thirty-eight percent of the Cole cases mentioned it, with 28 percent mentioning both negative personality traits and unattractive appearances. Though academic underachievers were mentioned in 36 percent of the cases at East, negative personality traits, persons using drugs, alcohol, or smoking, and unattractive persons were not far behind, receiving mention in 35 percent, 32 percent, and 29 percent of the cases, respectively. At Manual, 51 percent of the students mentioned academic underachievement as a low status trait. The next most often mentioned traits were negative personalities, at 35 percent, and use of drugs or alcohol and smoking, at 25 percent.

Summary and Discussion

Students gave their schools high marks on atmosphere, and all but a minority rated their courses as interesting.

In rating valued characteristics among peers, students overwhelmingly chose either athletic involvement (Chattanooga and Manley) or personality (Denver) as

TABLE 3.7
Traits Giving Students Low Status

	Percent of Cases*											
	Trouble-maker, rough	Stays out of trouble, weak	Academic Achiever	Academic Under-Achiever	Not Athletic	Active in Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking	Not Active in School Activities	Negative Person-ality	Low SES	Unattrac-tive	Few Friends	Other
Chattanooga												
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=24)	42	8	8	50	0	0	4	29	4	25	0	0
Howard H.S. (n=12)	8	0	0	42	8	0	8	33	0	42	0	0
Riverside H.S. (n=7)	29	14	0	29	0	0	0	57	14	14	0	0
Chicago												
Manley H.S. (n=33)	21	9	3	36	0	3	0	39	3	12	3	3
Denver												
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=72)	11	14	8	38	4	7	1	28	0	28	10	1
East H.S. (n=91)	13	7	4	36	3	32	7	35	11	29	12	3
Manual H.S. (n=57)	16	2	4	51	2	25	9	35	2	12	16	2

*The questionnaire item permitted more than one response, therefore percentages will exceed 100.

qualities that make for popularity. In only one of the schools, Alton Park, did academically successful kids rank first. High status, however, can be achieved if one is a good student or an athlete. Students in all but one of the Denver schools and at Alton Park (Chattanooga) chose academic achievement as a high status characteristic, whereas students in Manual (Denver), Howard and Riverside (Chattanooga), and Manley (Chicago) selected athletes. Students who perform poorly in school are most stigmatized by low status in all schools except Manley and Riverside. In these two schools, having negative personality traits is perceived as undesirable.

Overall, students in the sample endorsed the values that teenagers are commonly assumed to accept: To them, it is important to be good in sports and personable. After that, it is O.K. to be smart.

PUSH-EXCEL would argue, however, that academic achievement should rank as high as athletic skill or personal attractiveness, and that low status should be as much a function of negative behavior (e.g. drug abuse, troublemaking) as it is of poor academic performance and perceived personal unattractiveness.

ATMOSPHERE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

PUSH-EXCEL views parents as crucial in setting the time of the student's learning atmosphere outside the school. The indicators we examined for this aspect of atmosphere included parents' aspirations for their children and means by which they encourage their children to strive toward these goals. We also examined parents' views on school and community support of their children, and the family and community figures students view as role models.

What Parents Want for Their Children

Parents were asked, "What do you want most for your children?" Responses were coded into five categories -- education, self-sufficiency, general well-being, other, and don't know. The percentage of parental responses in each category are shown in Table 3.8, by school. The frequencies of first and second responses are listed separately. However, not all parents gave a second response to the question.

TABLE 3.8

What Parents Want Most for Their Children

(Percentages of Responses)

	First Response					Second Response				
	Education	Self-Sufficiency	General Well-Being	Other	Don't Know	Education	Self-Sufficiency	General Well-Being	Other	Don't Know
Chattanooga										
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=28)	71.4	3.6	25.0	0	0	3.6	32.1	3.6	0	0
Howard H.S. (n=77)	75.3	9.0	11.7	3.9	0	6.5	23.4	13.0	0	0
Riverside H.S. (n=9)	44.4	0	33.3	22.2	0	0	22.2	0	0	0
Chicago										
Manley H.S. (n=44)	65.9	9.1	25.0	0	0	9.1	13.6	0	0	0
Denver										
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=44)	10.5	5.3	78.9	5.3	0	5.3	2.6	5.3	0	0
East H.S. (n=54)	29.7	3.7	66.7	0	0	5.6	13.0	7.4	0	0
Manual H.S. (n=33)	21.2	3.0	66.7	6.1	3.0	15.2	[illegible]	18.2	0	0

A distinct pattern emerged for both Chattanooga and Chicago parents. They were overwhelmingly concerned that their children receive an education. It was mentioned first by 44 to 75 percent of these parents. Concern for their children's general well-being was mentioned by 12 to 33 percent and was the second highest first response. The most often-cited second response for these parents was self-sufficiency (14-32%). General well-being was mentioned by 13 percent of Howard parents, and no other second response received frequent mention.

In Denver, a distinctly different pattern emerged on parents' first responses. Sixty-seven to 79 percent of Denver parents were most concerned about their children's general well-being. Education was mentioned first in significantly fewer cases, 10 to 30 percent. No other first response was cited by a large number of parents. Most Cole parents did not offer a second response. At East, self-sufficiency was the most frequent second response, by 13 percent of parents. Manual parents responded more often than East's -- 18 percent mentioning general well-being and 15 percent mentioning education.

Parental Support

Efforts on behalf of their children. After parents had specified what they wanted most for their children, they were asked, "Are there ways you are helping them in these things?" Their responses were coded and formed five categories: (1) establish importance of school; (2) establish need for self-improvement; (3) offer resources; (4) no encouragement needed; and (5) other. Table 3.9 shows the percentage of parental responses in each of these categories, by school, for their first and second responses.

Again, a similar response pattern emerged for parents in Chattanooga and Chicago. Their most frequently cited form of encouragement was establishing the importance of school (67 to 82 percent). The second most frequent response was to establish the need for self-improvement, 9 to 21 percent. No parents in any of the Chattanooga schools initially responded that they offer resources and few parents in either city felt that their children needed no encouragement. The second responses were minimal and divided between establishing the importance of school and the need for self-improvement and offering resources. At Manley, 36 percent of the parents

TABLE 3.9
How Parents Encourage Their Children in School

(Percentages of Responses)

	First Response					Second Response				
	Establish Importance of School	Establish Need for Self-Improvement	Offer Resources	No Encouragement Needed	Other	Establish Importance of School	Establish Need for Self-Improvement	Offer Resources	No Encouragement Needed	Other
Chattanooga										
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=28)	71.4	21.4	0	7.1	2.6	14.3	3.6	3.6	0	0
Howard H.S. (n=77)	81.8	7.8	0	7.8	0	3.9	6.5	4.0	0	0
Riverside H.S. (n=9)	66.7	11.1	0	11.1	11.1	11.1	11.1	11.1	0	0
Chicago										
Manley H.S. (n=44)	79.5	9.1	4.5	4.5	2.2	9.1	20.5	36.4	0	0
Denver										
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=38)	84.2	7.9	0	5.3	2.6	5.2	15.8	2.6	0	0
East H.S. (n=54)	63.0	25.9	1.9	9.3	0	18.5	13.0	0	0	0
Manual H.S. (n=33)	72.7	6.0	12.1	9.1	0	6.0	15.1	12.1	0	0

gave "offer resources." Twenty percent stressed establishing the need for self-improvement.

Denver parents encouraged their children most frequently by establishing the importance of school, 63 to 84 percent. No other category was frequently mentioned as a first response by Cole parents. Twenty-six percent of East parents responded that they tried to establish the need for self-improvement. And 12 percent of Manual parents said they offer resources to their children. Establishing a need for self-improvement in children was the most frequent, 16 percent, second response of Cole parents. Establishing the importance of school was mentioned second by 18 percent of East parents and 13 percent mentioned establishing the need for self-improvement. Fifteen percent of the Manual parents gave establishing the need for self-improvement as their second response and 12 percent cited offering resources.

Creating parental involvement in the school. We asked parents, "In the past year have you tried to get other parents or community people to do things for the school?" As shown below, a sizeable majority of parents in each school said no.

	Percentages	
	Have Tried	Have Not Tried
Chattanooga		
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=28)	21	79
Howard H.S. (n=77)	13	87
Riverside H.S. (n=9)	44	56
Chicago		
Manley H.S. (n=44)	5	95
Denver		
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=38)	8	92
Manual H.S. (n=33)	9	91
East H.S. (n=54)	13	87

Parents who gave positive responses reported that specific needs or problems stimulated parental efforts to create involvement in the school:

> Yes, I've tried to get them to get rid of the principal and some of the older teachers. I've also tried to get some of them to come out to some of the activities to show the kids that they are even half interested.

> I've spent a lot of time in (school) with parents who are trying to upgrade the Math Department.

Among those who had not tried, three themes emerged. Often, parents perceived others as apathetic:

> No, the people I know wouldn't do anything to help themselves, let alone the school.

Or parents responded that their efforts had decreased since their children left grammar school:

> Not at _____, but at the grade school. I tried to get parents and teachers to get together to discuss problems.

Among a few, distance was a factor:

> Not in the past year primarily because of the distance between home and school.

Parent Perceptions of the Support System

The item tapping parents' perceptions of support for their children was, "Are there people in the school or community who are really trying to help (child's name)?" The answers were coded according to perceived school supports (shown on the next page) and perceived community supports.

	Percentages			
	Trying to Help	Not Trying to Help	Don't Know or Uncertain	Not Mentioned
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=28)	75.0	3.6	7.1	14.3
Howard H.S. (n=77)	80.5	13.0	6.5	0
Riverside H.S. (n=9)	66.7	0	22.2	11.1
Chicago				
Manley (n=44)	50.0	20.5	11.4	18.2
Denver				
Cole Jr. H. S. (n=38)	55.3	15.7	5.2	23.7
Manual H.S. (n=33)	57.6	24.2	3.0	15.2
East H.S. (n=54)	61.1	16.7	1.9	20.4

Of the parents that mentioned the school aspect, a majority said that help was available in the school. From none (Riverside) to a quarter (Manual) said no support was available, and a small minority did not know or expressed uncertainty.

Among those who felt that support existed, a specific teacher figured in the response:

> Yes. He has one teacher who is trying to do something for the boys. He's a big influence in his life....The band teacher does a lot for the kids.

The community fared much worse than the schools in parent perceptions of support. As the table on the next page shows, in only two of the schools (Alton Park and Riverside) did a majority of parents say that community support was available. Roughly a third of the parents at Howard (Chattanooga) and Manley (Chicago) said specifically that support was not available in the community.

	Percentages			
	Trying to Help	Not Trying to Help	Don't Know or Uncertain	Not Mentioned
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=28)	53.6	17.9	7.1	21.4
Howard H.S. (n=77)	22.1	33.8	10.4	34.0
Riverside H.S. (n=9)	55.6	11.1	33.3	0
Chicago				
Manley (n=44)	27.3	36.4	11.4	25.0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H. S. (n=38)	39.5	10.5	5.3	44.7
Manual H.S. (n=33)	27.3	21.2	3.0	48.5
East H.S. (n=54)	48.1	13.0	1.9	37.0

No distinct pattern of community support emerged. Resources included individuals:

> In the community, older people take him for their son. He's been operating this lady's cash register for sometime. She trusts him.

and community organizations:

> I can't say too much for the community. We have two centers around here in the community that do quite a bit for the children.

> A Fisherman's Club let him work. They want to see his report card -- said they'd help him.

Role Models

Parents and other family members consistently figured as persons students wanted most to be like. This is shown in Table 3.10, which contains responses to the question, "When you think of the kind of person you would

TABLE 3.10
Role Models

(In Percentages)

	Family Members	Community Role Models	School Role Models	Own Role Model	Celebrities	Unidentified
Chattanooga						
Alton Park Jr.H.S. (n=45)	55	0	13	4	11	17
Howard H.S. (n=85)	37	3	7	11	10	31
Riverside H.S. (n=18)	61	0	11	11	5	11
Chicago						
Manley H.S. (n=70)	60	4	11	11	0	15
Denver						
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=86)	65	11	4	2	6	10
East H.S. (n=101)	59	11	7	11	5	4
Manual H.S. (n=71)	67	14	7	2	9	5
Total (n=476)						

like to be as an adult, who is the one person you know that you would most like to be like?" A majority of the students in all schools except Howard (Chattanooga) cited people in their families. The percentages were highest at Cole and Manual in Denver.

The remaining role models fell into four categories: community role models, school role models, self, and celebrities. The percentage of community role models and celebrities varied across sites. In the Chattanooga schools, very few students chose community role models (3% at Howard High School) and less than 15 percent in each school chose celebrities as role models. At Chicago's Manley High School, only four percent of the students identified community role models, while no students cited celebrities. Less than 15 percent of the students in each of the Denver schools reported community figures and celebrities as role models. However, the percentages of students who identified community role models were higher than those at any other site.

Summary and Discussion

As PUSH-EXCEL emphasizes, parents and other family members do figure prominently as sources of identity. This was indicated by students' responses to the question about who they wanted to be like. But while parents offer encouragement in the home for their children's efforts, they do not engage in activities to create greater parental involvement in school affairs.

Only a minority of parents said that they offered concrete resources to help their children. This finding is congruent with PUSH-EXCEL's assumption that parents do not do all that can be done to support students in their efforts to achieve. However, many parents may take for granted the resources they do provide. For example, a preliminary reading of students' responses to the question, "Where do you usually study?," showed that most students reported having a quiet place in the home. This is one of the things that the program suggests that parents offer, but the low frequencies we received about the provision of resources suggests that parents may not have had this or other specifics in mind.

Parental perceptions about community supports for students confirm the program's view that such resources are not mobilized. Also, students did not see community figures as role models.

When these and other findings presented in the chapter are considered together, the typical climate for learning is one characterized by both problems and strengths. On the problem side are indications that the school is not what it could be for some students. This evidence is in the high absentee, drop-out, and suspension rates. For teachers, the school is not what it could be either. This is suggested by the mixed and negatively toned descriptions they have of the students, parents, and learning climate. Parental inactivity in stimulating efforts among other parents and low community support of students, as presented by parents, reflect the universal complaint of schools that involvement is low.

On the plus side are parent reports that the importance of education is transmitted in the home, and a sense among teachers that they can influence students and school policy. While academic achievers are unlikely to win popularity contests, the ethos of students is one that does not value poor performance.

How did individual students fare within these environments? We consider the baseline data on this question in the chapter to follow.

4. Aspiration, Expectancy, and Effort

One of PUSH-EXCEL's most famous slogans is, "If you can conceive it, and believe it, you can achieve it." In fact, the slogan includes the three basic steps from changing one's mind to changing one's behavior: aspiration ("conceive it"), expectancy ("believe it"), and effort ("achieve it").

The first step toward success is to conceive it -- to aspire. PUSH-EXCEL argues that if there are no aspirations, there will be no efforts. And, too often, students set their aspirations low.

Setting a goal must be followed by a second step, "believe it." And, too often, says PUSH-EXCEL, students do not expect to achieve, nor do others believe that they will.

Once students set a goal and expect to obtain it, they must make the effort to achieve. In the program's view, the reason that students fail to achieve is often because they do not try to achieve. They do not study, or they do not even get to school or to class.

Where did the students stand last year in their aspirations, expectancies, and efforts to achieve? The discussion of this question is divided into three parts. In the first, we examined aspirations, expectancies, and efforts in the context of future options. The second section discusses these elements in relation to academic achievement. The third section deals with them in terms of current, nonacademic realities.

THE FUTURE

Aspirations

Careers. We asked all the students, "What sort of work do you think you might do for a living?" The open-ended responses that students gave first were coded according to the 13 occupational classifications used in the U.S. Census. The responses are shown in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1
Career Choices (First Responses)

	Percentages										
	Professional	Managers/ Administrators	Sales	Clerical	Craftsman	Operatives	Transport Equip. Operatives	Service	Private Household	Military	Don't Kn
Chattanooga											
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	42	2	0	16	7	0	4	11	2	0	16
Howard H.S. (n=85)	44	4	1	11	11	0	0	7	1	2	20
Kirkman H.S. (n=61)	62	0	0	3	20	0	2	7	0	2	5
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	35	0	0	12	24	0	0	6	0	6	18
Chicago											
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=91)	53	2	0	13	24	1	0	3	0	1	2
Manley H.S. (n=71)	70	1	3	7	7	0	1	7	0	1	1
Denver											
Cole H.S. (n=88)	64	2	2	6	3	0	1	6	0	2	14
East H.S. (n=109)	81	2	1	2	3	0	0	5	1	1	5
Manual H.S. (n=77)	86	0	0	3	3	0	0	5	0	0	4

In all schools, students' aspirations most frequently were for professional jobs. In all but three -- the predominantly black Chattanooga schools (Alton Park, Howard, and Riverside) -- the majority of students preferred the professions. In East and Manual (Denver) and Manley (Chicago), the majorities were sizeable.

None of the students aspired to farm-related work (not surprising given the urban settings in which the schools are located), and only a few chose jobs in the categories of Manager/Administrators, Sales, Operatives, Transport Equipment Operations, Private Household, and Military. The highest percentage in any of the seven categories was six percent.

The two vocational/technical schools, Kirkman (Chattanooga) and Chicago Vocational, and Riverside (Chattanooga) showed the highest percentages of students aspiring to jobs in the skilled trades. In the two remaining categories, Clerical and Service, the percentages of choices were highest in the Chattanooga and Chicago schools.

Approximately a fifth of the students in three schools (Alton Park Jr. High, Howard and Riverside in Chattanooga), had not chosen a career. In the other schools, students who were undecided accounted for very small percentages (14 or less) of the total sample.

Post high school plans. The students' plan for activities upon graduation from high school are shown in Table 4.2. College was the choice of a majority of students in all but two Chattanooga schools, Kirkman and Riverside. In the Denver schools, the percentages exceed those of other sites by as much as 29 points.

A paying job was the second most popular choice, especially among the Chattanooga students. Close behind was military service. The frequency of plans for vocational school and junior college varied within each site, but in none were preferences for these options stated by more than 15 percent of the students.

Expectancies

We used two measures to elicit students' beliefs about how the future would turn out. The first asked students to rate their chances of having the specific

TABLE 4.2
Post High School Plans

	Percentages						
	Vocational School	Junior Colleges	College	Job	Military	Other	Undecided
Chattanooga							
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=43)	0	2	56	35	5	5	5
Howard H.S. (n=85)	2	0	64	18	19	5	6
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	11	3	48	26	10	3	14
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	0	13	47	33	20	7	7
Chicago							
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=98)	15	9	50	32	13	7	6
Manley H.S. (n=71)	3	9	66	15	10	6	3
Denver							
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=86)	1	5	73	14	9	1	9
East H.S. (n=109)	2	6	76	7	6	3	7
Manual H.S. (n=75)	4	3	73	4	8	4	13

Note: Students could select more than one response, hence the total percentages for a given school can exceed 100.

futures they had described to us. The second measure, composed of four separately scored items, tapped students' beliefs about how life in general would turn out.

Expectancies for having a chosen future. Students were overwhelmingly optimistic about having the future they had chosen. As shown in Table 4.3, most students rated their chances as good or very good. Only a small minority of responses (9% or fewer) in each school fell into the "not so good" and "not good at all" categories.

Expectancies about life in general. Responses to the four items in this set were classified into two main categories: internal, if they reflected a belief that one has control over things, and external, if they indicated a belief that factors beyond one's control would make the major difference in life opportunities. The results are shown in Table 4.4. We consider the responses to each question in turn.

In the first question, "Do you think it is better to plan your life a good way ahead, or would you say life is too much a matter of luck to plan ahead very far?" Most students endorsed the value of making plans for the future. Roughly a quarter to a third in each school responded that life is too much a matter of luck (external).

The second question was, "When you do make plans ahead, do you usually get to carry out things the way you expected, or do things come up to make you change your plans?" In five of the seven schools (Alton Park and Howard in Chattanooga, Cole and Manual in Denver and Manley in Chicago), a majority of the students said that things came up (external). In the remaining Denver school, the responses were balanced between the two alternatives. At Riverside (Chattanooga), a substantial percentage chose the "internal" option; other responses were balanced between "both" and "external" alternatives.

The majority of students in each of the schools expressed uncertainty (external) in response to the third question, "Have you usually felt pretty sure that your life would work out the way you want it to, or have there been times when you have not been sure about it?" Only a quarter to roughly one-third in each school were sure that their lives would work out as planned.

TABLE 4.3
Perceived Likelihood of Having Desired Future

	Percentages			
	Chances Very Good	Chances Good	Chances Not So Good	Chances Not Good at All
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=42)	24	71	5	0
Howard H.S. (n=82)	35	54	6	1
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	32	63	5	0
Riverside H.S. (n=16)	25	75	0	0
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=97)	36	64	0	0
Manley H.S. (n=70)	34	63	3	0
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=85)	28	61	8	0
East H.S. (n=106)	31	60	9	0
Manual H.S. (n=73)	30	62	6	1

TABLE 4.4
Ratings of Personal Efficacy

Percentages

	CHATTANOOGA									CHICAGO						DENVER								
	Alton Park			Howard			Riverside			Manley			Cole			East			Manual		
	Int.	Ext.	Both	Int.	Ext.	Both	Int.	Ext.	Both	Int.	Ext.	Both	Int.	Ext.	Both/Neither	Int.	Ext.	Both/Neither	Int.	Ext.	Both
Do you think it is better to plan your life a good way ahead, or would you say life is too much a matter of luck to plan ahead very far?	61	36	2 (n=44)	67	33	0 (n=82)	71	29	0 (n=17)	76	21	3 (n=71)	65	32	0 (n=74)	74	23	3 (n=95)	58	35	8 (n=66)
When you do make plans ahead, do you usually get to carry out things the way you expected, or do things come up to make you change your plans?	43	52	5 (n=44)	34	61	5 (n=83)	47	29	24 (n=17)	41	55	4 (n=71)	40	50	9.3 (n=75)	45	45	10 (n=95)	41	53	6 (n=66)
Have you usually felt pretty sure that your life would work out the way you want it to, or have there been times when you have not been sure about it?	36	60	4 (n=45)	25	73	4 (n=84)	29	53	18 (n=17)	46	54	0 (n=68)	29	64	7 (n=73)	36	62	2 (n=95)	33	59	8 (n=66)
Some people feel they can run their lives pretty much the way they want to; others feel the problems of life are sometimes too big for them. Which ones are you most like?	44	53	2 (n=43)	48	49	2 (n=83)	53	41	6 (n=17)	46	51	3 (n=69)	64	25	11 (n=72)	77	14	9 (n=93)	68	15	17 (n=65)

In the final question, "Some people feel they can run their lives pretty much the way they want to; others feel the problems of life are sometimes too big for them. Which ones are you most like?" Students who believed in their own efficacy constituted two-thirds or more of the total responses in the Denver schools. In contrast, students in the three Chattanooga schools and in Manley were evenly split between feelings that life problems could be overwhelming and the belief that they could control their own lives.

Efforts

There is a host of actions students can take to prepare for the future. We asked students in the interview sample about the following: talk to PUSH-EXCEL staff, take courses, do volunteer work, visit local businesses, talk to a counselor, visit college or vocational school, write for information, and take entrance examinations. Specifically the question asked, "What kinds of things have you done to help you in reaching your goals?" The responses are shown in Table 4.5. The average number of responses per student was two.

Taking courses was the most frequent action. From 29 to 75 percent of the students in each school listed this option. For all other categories, only a minority in each school said they had made a given effort. Variation was considerable between schools and within sites.

Some students responded "don't know." The percentages ranged from four to 20. A substantial minority in the Chattanooga schools, at Chicago's Manley High School, and at Cole in Denver listed efforts that fell into the "other" category. Among these were talking to relatives, friends, and professionals; reading books; attending career day presentations; joining a high school internship program; helping parents at their office; and working on the school newspaper. One of the most frequently cited efforts in this category was working at a job which the student viewed as apprenticeship. (We consider job experience as a separate item in the next section.)

In the standard samples (Kirkman in Chattanooga, and Chicago Vocational), we used a slightly different wording. We asked, "What can you do in high school that will help you reach this goal?" The answers, which reflect

TABLE 4.5

Self Reports of Efforts Made to Reach Goals

	Percentages									
	Talk to PE Staff	Take Courses	Volunteer Work	Visit Local Business	Talk to Counselor	Visit College or Vocational School	Write for Information	Take Entrance Examination	Other	Don't
Chattanooga										
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=38)	15	45	36	26	24	8	11	3	28	13
Howard H.S. (n=59)	5	29	5	5	20	10	5	2	39	17
Riverside H.S. (n=15)	13	73	40	20	33	47	27	7	33	7
Chicago										
Manley H.S. (n=66)	3	59	3	6	24	8	15	2	24	14
Denver										
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=80)	7	43	11	20	9	3	11	1	23	20
East H.S. (n=103)	10	59	18	30	24	16	18	15	16	7
Manual H.S. (n=75)	8	75	8	15	13	15	15	11	15	4

Note: The interview item permitted multiple responses, therefore total percentages for a given school may exceed 100.

knowledge of efforts that can be made rather than actual efforts, are shown in Table 4.6.

Taking courses was the most frequently cited effort that students said could be made. We found a similar range of percentages in the corresponding question on the interview.

Job experience. Students may work to earn pocket money or to defray expenses at home. In addition to these benefits, however, a job can expose students to the day-to-day requirements of work (e.g., proper attire, appropriate on-the-job behaviors) and to career options that may be pursued in the future.

We asked students whether they were employed at the time of the interview. The breakdowns were as follows:*

	Percentages	
	Employed at Time of Interview	Not Employed
Chattanooga		
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	4	96
Howard H.S. (n=85)	28	72
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	18	82
Chicago		
Manley H.S. (n=72)	15	85
Denver		
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	36	64
East H.S. (n=109)	28	72
Manual H.S. (n=77)	26	74

Only a minority of students in each school were working. Of those that were, many listed babysitting, bussing tables, delivering newspapers, cooking or

*Questions about employment were asked only of students in the interview samples.

TABLE 4.6
Knowledge of Ways to Reach Goals

	Percentages of Responses									
	Talk to PE Staff	Take Courses	Volunteer Work	Visit Local Businesses	Talk to Counselor	Visit College or Vocational School	Write for Information	Take Entrance Examination	Other	Don't Know
Chattanooga										
Kirkman H.S. (n=146)	7	28	10	6	12	13	16	6	0	2
Chicago										
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=22)	2	20	4	6	17	13	13	9	4	2

cleaning at fast food restaurants, cleaning up the school or recreation centers, and tutoring.

The percentages of students who had worked in the past were much higher:

	Percentages	
	Had Been Employed in the Past	Had Never Worked
Chattanooga		
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=44)	27	73
Howard H.S. (n=85)	45	55
Riverside H.S. (n=109)	69	31
Chicago		
Manley H.S. (n=72)	71	29
Denver		
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	58	42
East H.S. (n=109)	76	24
Manual H.S. (n=75)	80	20

A majority of students in all schools except Alton Park and Howard in Chattanooga, reported that they had worked previously. Many of the same types of jobs were listed under former jobs as under current jobs, though there was a greater prevalence of mowing lawns, delivering papers, and working in parks and day camps.

Summary and Discussion

The data presented in this section show a group of students who have high career aspirations, concrete plans for what they will do after graduation, and confidence that the futures they desire will be realized. They value planning ahead. However, many express uncertainty about the extent to which they generally can carry out their plans. And the efforts the students are making now in preparation for the future fall within a narrow band.

If there is a problem of aspiration, as PUSH-EXCEL asserts, then it is a problem of unrealistically high ones. Typically, the students preferred the professions, and only marginally considered other options.

The site differences in the students' post high school plans suggest that economic realities figured in the aspirations. Among the relatively more affluent Denver students, jobs and military service were rare options. These options were more frequent in Chattanooga and Chicago students, many of whom come from low socioeconomic neighborhoods.

Although the students in all schools were typically optimistic about reaching their goals, the level of effort to reach the goals was greatest in taking courses -- an effort they can make by simply going to school. Making other efforts, however, often presents difficulties; many, like visiting colleges or working, are a function of opportunities that others must create for students. And taking entrance exams to get into college or to see how one stands academically is an effort that is encouraged in 11th or 12th grade. Students in these samples were in either the 10th or the 8th grade when the interviews were conducted.

Striving for goals that are many years in the future simply may not be high on the list of these students' priorities. Getting out of school, or even passing courses one semester at a time may be more important. The students' current reality is the topic to which we now turn.

THE PRESENT: PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL

PUSH-EXCEL wants to get students to try to achieve in school. Its activities are intended to stimulate the kinds of efforts that students can make right now: studying, going to school, and behaving according to school rules. Moreover, PUSH-EXCEL wants students to set high aspirations for success in school and equally high expectations for achieving desired goals. The program views these attitudes and efforts as preconditions to changes in grades and test scores, i.e., in the criteria usually applied to educational programs.

Where did the students stand last year in their school-related attitudes and behaviors?

Aspiration and Expectancy

When asked, "Do you plan to finish high school?," virtually all of the students said yes, as shown below:

	Percentages		
	Plans to Graduate	Does Not Plans to Graduate	Don't Know
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	96	2	2
Howard H.S. (n=85)	99	1	0
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	100	0	0
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	94	6	0
Chicago			
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=98)	100	0	0
Manley H.S. (n=71)	100	0	0
Denver			
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	99	1	0
East H.S. (n=109)	100	0	0
Manual H.S. (n=77)	99	1	0

Moreover, a substantial majority were certain that they would graduate:

	Percentages				
	Certain	Fairly Certain	Less Certain	Chances Pretty Slim	Don't Know
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=44)	64	20	14	2	0
Howard H.S. (n=83)	70	17	10	4	0
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	61	26	8	5	0
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	65	12	12	12	0
Chicago					
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=97)	70	25	4	1	0
Manley H.S. (n=71)	80	7	7	4	1
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	72	24	2	1	0
East H.S. (n=109)	86	7	5	2	0
Manual H.S. (n=76)	89	8	1	1	0

The high value that these students placed on high school graduation was reflected in their persistence in staying in school. Ninety-nine to 100 percent of the students in each school reported that they had never dropped out of school. As Table 4.7 shows, the most frequent reason students cited for staying in school was that they need an education. Parental pressure and liking school ranked as poor seconds.

Students' expectations for academic success in the immediate future were elicited by the question, "How do you expect your academic performance this year will compare with others in your class?" The choices, which ranged from "I'll do better than 90 percent of the others" to "I'll do better than ten percent of the others," are in Table 4.8.

Roughly a fifth of all the students placed their probable performance in the upper ten percent of the class. Within individual schools the percentages ranged from ten to 30. The most sizable percentage of responses fell into the category, "I'll do better than 70 percent of the others." Students who predicted that they would be in the upper half (better than 50%) accounted for about a quarter of the sample. As the figures in the 30 percent and ten percent categories indicate, only small percentages of students at any school were pessimistic about their probable standing in the class.

In the PUSH-EXCEL rationale, expectancy is presumed to affect performance: Students who expect to do well will do well. Thus the "problem" students are those characterized by low expectancies and low performance (as measured by grade point average). As the table on the next page shows, roughly a quarter of the students in all schools except Riverside High School displayed that pattern. Similar proportions had high expectations and low performance. Only a small minority had low expectations and high performance. Most prevalent were students who expected to do well and later did so.

TABLE 4.7

Reasons for Staying in School

	Percentages										
	Would Be Bored At Home	Need Education	To Be With Friends	Unable To Find A Job	Parental Pressure	To Stay Out Of Trouble	Really Likes School	Other	Want To Be Somebody	Sports & Activities	Don't Know
Chattanooga											
Alton Park Jr.H.S. (n=40)	0	55	5	0	18	5	10	5	0	0	3
Howard H.S. (n=85)	1	52	0	1	15	0	14	0	8	4	0
Riverside H.S. (n=13)	0	62	0	0	23	8	0	0	8	0	0
Chicago											
Manley H.S. (n=62)	3	45	2	0	23	2	13	0	11	2	0
Denver											
Cole Jr.H.S. (n=43)	2	44	7	5	12	0	14	0	14	0	2
East H.S. (n=62)	0	48	5	0	15	0	18	0	15	0	0
Manual H.S. (n=23)	0	35	4	0	13	0	13	13	17	0	4

TABLE 4.8
Academic Self-Concept

	Percentages of Students that will do better than				
	90% of Class	70% of Class	50% of Class	30% of Class	10% of Class
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	20	42	22	9	7
Howard H.S. (n=85)	11	53	26	8	2
Kirkman H.S. (n=61)	18	39	30	13	0
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	18	47	29	6	0
Chicago					
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=97)	12	40	36	8	3
Manley H.S. (n=70)	30	34	31	4	0
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=82)	15	41	28	10	6
East H.S. (n=101)	21	40	31	9	0
Manual H.S. (n=70)	29	44	21	6	0

	Percentages			
	High Expectancy		Low Expectancy	
	High GPA	Low GPA	High GPA	Low GPA
Alta Park Jr. H.S. (n=35)	37	23	17	23
Howard H.S. (n=66)	36	26	12	26
Kirkman H.S. (n=58)	16	28	35	22
Riverside H.S. (n=13)	31	54	8	8
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=73)	37	16	12	34
East H.S. (n=95)	40	21	10	29
Manual H.S. (n=70)	43	30	7	20

Efforts

We have seen that students want to graduate and were optimistic about achieving this goal. Below we examine what they were doing in the present to turn their expectation into reality.

Getting there. Presumably, if a student wants to graduate from school, he or she must get there first, and then go to class. Also, schools encourage students not only to show up, but to get to school and to class on time. This section deals with self-ratings of three behaviors:* tardiness to school, tardiness to class, and skipping class.

Students were asked to rate themselves in one of five categories (Never, Hardly Ever, Monthly, Weekly, Daily) on each item. For each student, the responses were averaged across items. Only a small minority (11% or fewer) in each school reported that they engaged in these behaviors on a frequent (i.e., weekly or daily) basis. As the following table shows, the highest percentages of students placed themselves in the "Hardly Ever" category.

*We have collected data on absences on a case-by-case basis. The data formats and location vary considerably from one school district to another. Denver, for example, reports absentees on report cards and for each class. Chattanooga records days present on permanent files for each student. At this writing, we are processing the various data for computer analyses.

The percentage of students who reported being tardy or skipping class monthly ranged from eight at Kirkman in Chattanooga to 38 at Chicago's Manley.

	Percentages Reporting				
	Never	Hardly Ever	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	40	42	13	4	0
Howard H.S. (n=85)	14	42	33	7	1
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	53	35	8	2	2
Riv[illegible] (n=17)	41	35	18	6	0
Chicago					
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=97)	24	36	30	9	1
Manley H.S. (n=71)	10	38	38	11	3
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	22	62	15	1	0
East H.S. (n=1[illegible])	10	51	26	11	2
Manual H.S. (n=76)	21	46	26	5	1

Is there, as PUSH-EXCEL asserts, an increased probability of doing well in school courses if one gets to class on time or at all? As shown on the next page, the frequencies for each of four performance (low grade point average vs. high grade point average) by poor attendance (frequent vs. infrequent) groups were distributed with only slight departure from what would be expected by chance alone: Expressed as percentages (Table A-1, Appendix A), there are roughly a quarter of the students in the schools who report having frequent problems in getting to class and school, and who do poorly (at Howard this accounts for about half of the students in the sample). From 14 percent (Manual) to 49 percent (Alton) do poorly but report that they have no problems related to attendance.

	Self-Reported Incidence of Poor Attendance	Frequencies* Low GPA Obtained	Low GPA Chance	High GPA Obtained	High GPA Chance
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	Frequent	7	5	1	3
	Infrequent	17	18	10	8
Howard H.S.	Frequent	34	32	7	9
	Infrequent	17	19	8	6
Kirkman H.S.	Frequent	8	7	21	22
	Infrequent	5	7	24	22
Riverside H.S.	Frequent	2	2	3	3
	Infrequent	3	3	5	5
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S.	Frequent	20	16	13	17
	Infrequent	17	21	28	24
East H.S.	Frequent	25	22	27	30
	Infrequent	17	20	31	28
Manual H.S.	Frequent	16	13	20	23
	Infrequent	11	14	29	26

*Chi-square or other appropriate tests were conducted to assess the statistical significance of relationship between row and column variables. In all of the schools, the results failed to reach significance levels.

Behavior in Class. Students were asked to rate the extent to which they engaged in the following six behaviors:

- doing sloppy work,
- goofing off in class,
- arguing with teachers,
- coming to class unprepared,
- angering teachers, and
- doing incomplete work.

Scores for each item ranged from 1 (Never) to 5 (Almost Every Day), and a students' responses were averaged across the six items. The results are shown below:

	Percentages Reporting				
	Never	Hardly Ever	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	4	51	31	9	4
Howard H.S. (n=84)	4	50	37	10	0
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	45	44	8	2	2
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	18	35	47	0	0
Chicago					
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=96)	36	49	13	2	0
Manley H.S. (n=68)	9	57	28	6	0
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=84)	1	46	32	17	4
East H.S. (n=109)	8	66	23	3	0
Manual H.S. (n=76)	5	53	33	9	0

Typically, the average score of a majority of students fall into the "Hardly Ever" category. The exceptions were Riverside (Chattanooga), where 47 percent fell into the "Monthly" category; Cole (Denver), where 32 percent scored "Monthly" and 17 percent, "Weekly"; and Kirkman (Chattanooga), where roughly equal percentages chose the "Never" and "Hardly Ever" alternatives. At all schools, "Weekly" or "Daily" scores constituted small minorities.

The program hypothesizes that "playing the game" -- being attentive in class, and coming to class prepared -- should have a payoff in improved academic performance. The data on the following page, however, are contrary to that expectation.

	Self-Reported Incidence of School Behavior Problems	Frequencies*			
		Low GPA		High GPA	
		Obtained	Chance	Obtained	Chance
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S.	Frequent	16	14	5	7
	Infrequent	8	10	6	4
Howard H.S.	Frequent	36	33	7	10
	Infrequent	14	17	8	5
Kirkman H.S.	Frequent	13	13	14	13
	Infrequent	16	16	15	16
Riverside H.S.	Frequent	3	3	5	5
	Infrequent	2	2	3	3
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S.	Frequent	20	20	22	22
	Infrequent	15	15	18	18
East H.S.	Frequent	17	15	18	20
	Infrequent	26	28	40	38
Manual H.S.	Frequent	11	13	27	25
	Infrequent	15	13	23	25

*Chi-square or other appropriate tests were conducted to assess the statistical significance of relationship between row and column variables. In all of the schools, the results failed to reach significance levels.

At Alton Park and Howard there are sizeable percentages of students who have low grade point averages and who report that they have school behavior problems. (Table A-2, Appendix A). At the other schools, this pattern characterizes from 14 percent (Manual) to 27 percent (Cole) of the students. About 20 percent of the students in all the samples say that they behave appropriately but actually perform poorly. And in five of the seven schools, roughly even percentages of the high performance students report frequent and infrequent behavior problems.

Behavior that would warrant severe disciplinary actions was apparently not a problem among students in the sample. As shown below, sizeable majorities in each school reported that their parents had never been called in for a disciplinary hearing.

	Percentages		
	Parents Never Called in	Parents Called Once or or Twice	Parents Called in 3 or More Times
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	89	9	2
Howard H.S. (n=85)	75	22	2
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	71	23	6
Chicago			
Manley H.S. (n=71)	90	10	0
Denver			
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	81	15	5
East H.S. (n=109)	94	6	0
Manual H.S. (n=77)	97	3	0

Suspensions were also infrequent, especially in the Denver High students:

	Percentages		
	Never Suspended	Suspended Once or Twice	Suspended 3 or More Times
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	84	16	0
Howard H.S. (n=85)	72	26	2
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	65	35	0
Chicago			
Manley H.S. (n=72)	89	11	0
Denver			
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	86	13	1
East H.S. (n=109)	97	3	0
Manual H.S. (n=77)	95	5	0

Studying. We asked all the students, "About how much time do you spend in an average day on all your homework?" The answers are shown in Table 4.9.

The majority of the students responded that they spent time on homework, although at four of the schools (Howard, Kirkman, Chicago Vocational, and Cole) the time amounted to less than an hour. At the remaining five schools, most students reported spending more than an hour.

PUSH-EXCEL's messages to students emphasize effort on homework. According to the rationale, more time on homework should lead to higher grades. We examined the hypothesized relationship in cross-tabulations of performance (grade point average) and time on homework ("less than one hour," "one-two hours," and "greater than two hours"). The results are shown on the following page. In the Chattanooga samples, students were distributed among the performance by time on homework groups at chance levels. In the Denver samples more low performance and fewer high performance students fell into the "Less than one hour" category than would be expected by chance. Also, fewer low performance and more high performance students fell into the "One-two hours" and "Greater than two hours" categories than one would expect if chance alone determined the distribution. However, at Cole and Manual the relationship was weak.

Summary and Discussion

The vast majority of students in all the schools want to graduate from high school and are certain that they will do so. When academic performance is considered, a majority expect to be in the upper 30 percent, a sizeable minority expects to place somewhere in the top half, and a small minority expects to be in the lower half. The students study, although there is a small minority in each school who claim to spend no time at all on homework. And a small group reports frequent infringements on school rules, inadequate preparation, and goofing off in class. Only rarely did students in the study report that they had been suspended or that the school had conducted disciplinary hearings with their parents.

The problems that PUSH-EXCEL wants to solve exist among students in the samples, but they are most apparent

		Frequencies*			
		Low GPA		High GPA	
	Self-Reported Time on Homework	Obtained	Chance	Obtained	Chance
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr.H.S.	Less than 1 hour	10	9	3	4
	1-2 hours	11	10	4	5
	Greater than 2 nours	3	5	4	2
			χ^2 = 2.72,n.s.		
Howard H.S.	Less than 1 hour	39	39	12	12
	1-2 hours	10	10	3	3
	Greater than 2 hours	2	2	0	0
			χ^2 = .60,n.s.		
Kirkman H.S.	Less than 1 hour	16	17	17	17
	1-2 hours	8	8	8	8
	Greater than 2 hours	5	5	4	5
			χ^2 = .14,n.s.		
Riverside H.S.	Less than 1 hour	1	1	1	1
	1-2 hours	4	3	4	5
	Greater than 2 hours	0	1	3	2
Denver					
Cole Jr.H.S.	Less than 1 hour	24	19	16	21
	1-2 hours	10	13	18	15
	Greater than 2 hours	3	5	8	6
			χ^2 = 5.86, 2 = .053		
East H.S.	Less than 1 hour	28	20	20	28
	1-2 hours	11	14	22	19
	Greater than 2 hours	4	9	16	11
			χ^2 = 10.19, 2 = .006		
Manual H.S.	Less than 1 hour	13	9	14	18
	1-2 hours	12	13	24	23
	Greater than 2 hours	2	5	12	9
			χ^2 = 4.73, 2 = .09		

* Chi-square or other appropriate tests were conducted to assess the statistical significance of relationship between row and column variables. In all of the schools but East, the results failed to reach acceptable significance levels.

TABLE 4.9
Time Spent on Homework

	Percentages				
	None	Less Than 30 Minutes	30-59 Minutes	1-2 Hours	Over 2 Hours
Chattanooga					
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	4	7	31	40	18
Howard H.S. (n=85)	4	21	48	21	6
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	11	14	32	27	15
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	6	6	12	53	24
Chicago					
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=96)	2	10	44	23	21
Manley H.S. (n=70)	4	10	26	34	26
Denver					
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	6	14	32	34	15
East H.S. (n=109)	6	11	29	34	20
Manual H.S. (n=77)	3	3	30	47	18

when patterns of expectancy and effort are considered. The patterning also indicates that the problems are more complex than PUSH-EXCEL's statement of them. Three sets of findings serve to illustrate this.

1. Academic expectancy and performance. The program assumes that one problem is among students characterized by low performance and low expectancy. The data show that 20 percent of the students are of this type. But a roughly equal proportion consists of students with high expectations and low performance. These students constitute a second problem group: those whose attitudes are fine, who may try harder, but who may become disenchanted if their performance consistently fails to live up to expectations. Moreover, the low expectancy group may consist of students who can not do better even if their expectancies change.

2. School-related behavior and performance. PUSH-EXCEL sees as a problem group those kids who do not consistently follow the rules -- for example getting to class and doing assignments properly. In fact, there was a proportion, sometimes the majority, of students in each school who reported that they frequently had problems in this regard.

However, the data indicate that doing the right things hardly makes a difference in academic performance. For the low performance student, the problem may be one of seeing a payoff for making the effort. Those who are already following the rules may decide that doing better is impossible, so why bother to continue the effort? Those who are not may figure that their chances of getting good grades are about the same whether they shape up or not.

3. Time on homework and performance. PUSH-EXCEL specifically urges students to study at least two hours a night (with the added proviso of no distractions) and sometimes it suggests that students simply study more. Among Denver students, high performance students tended to spend more time on homework than their low performance peers, and there was roughly a quarter of the students in each school that fit EXCEL's definition of the problem -- low performance and little time on homework.

In Chattanooga, and particularly so at Howard, there was a low effort, low performance group, but they were

indistinguishable from their high performance peers when studying was at issue. Again the problem here may involve the efforts made once the payoffs are perceived as random events. For the low performance students, it may be a case of "damned if you do, damned if you don't."

THE PRESENT: SELF-IMPOSED CHOICES AND ACTIVITIES

One of PUSH-EXCEL's tenets is that high aspiration and effort should extend beyond the school to all other areas of students' lives. This theme may be found in the Rev. Jackson's messages to students, educators, parents, and the community. Specifically, he urges students to choose constructive pursuits that will have a positive payoff in the future rather than activities that provide only momentary gratification.

In this section we present the baseline data on two aspects of students lives: self-improvement and use of time after school. These areas may have consequences for school performance and success in a career. However, students can choose leisure-time and personal development activities that have no particular relationship to school or the future. We examine the range of choices and efforts in the paragraphs below.

Use of Time After School

We asked two different questions about use of after-school time. The first asked students in the interview sample, "What do you usually do after school?" The second asked all students to select, from a list presented in the questionnaire and interview protocols, the activities they participated in.

Usual After-School Activities. To the first, open-ended question, students responded as shown in Table 4.10. The activities may be ranked roughly as follows, from the most frequently cited choice to the least:

1. Studying
2. Helping with housework
3. Watching T.V.
4. Participation in "pick-up" sports activities

TABLE 4.10
Usual After-School Activities

	Percentages												
	Sports	Nonorganized Sports	Club or Cultural Events	Visit With Friends	Study	Watch T.V.	Help With Housework	Part-Time Job	Hang Around	Talk On Phone	Volunteer Work	Shop	Other
Chattanooga													
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	[illegible]	36	29	24	71	36	49	2	0	4	0	0	11
Howard H.S. (n=85)	[illegible]	32	15	13	55	26	29	15	0	0	0	0	21
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	18	35	18	12	71	35	47	0	0	0	0	0	59
Chicago													
Manley H.S. (n=71)	13	21	13	22	66	27	38	7	0	4	1	0	28
Denver													
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	8	25	8	31	59	29	65	15	6	1	1	10	30
East H.S. (n=109)	25	16	15	39	57	29	75	17	0	4		0	14
Manual H.S. (n=77)	40	18	1	40	38	14	86	13	4	1	6	6	12

Note: Students could select more than one response, hence the total percentage for a given school can exceed 100.

5. visiting with friends;

6. Participation in organized sports

7. Participation in clubs or cultural events

8. Part-time jobs

9. Hanging around the neighborhood, volunteer work, talking on the phone, and shopping.

Participation in after-school activities. The level of participation in after-school activities is shown in Table 4.11. Sizeable majorities of students in virtually all schools listed in order of popularity:

- reading for enjoyment;
- outdoor recreation;
- pursuing hobbies; and
- going to the movies.

Movie-going was an extremely popular activity in Denver, where percentages ranged from 93 to 99. In contrast, the percentages of students in other sites reporting this activity were more modest, ranging from 53 to 68.

There was substantial within-site and between-site variation in participation in the remaining categories: team sports, school clubs, visits to museums, attendance at special events (e.g., the circus), church activities, and volunteer activities. Typically, however, a minority of students in each school responded that they pursued these activities.

Activities at neighborhood recreation centers were a popular option in Chattanooga, where a majority of students in all schools but Alton Park selected this item. In Chicago and Denver, the percentages were less than half of those for the Chattanooga students.

TABLE 4.11
Participation in After-School Activities

	Percentages													
	Team Sports	School Clubs	Attend Plays	Read for Own Enjoyment	Visit Museums	Attend Special Events	Outdoor Recreation	Visit Another City	Church Activities	Neighborhood Recreation Center Activities	Pursue Hobbies	Go to Movies*	Volunteer Activities*	Other
Chattanooga														
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=44)	29	52	14	89	25	32	75	52	50	39	82	57	34	11
Howard H.S. (n=85)	49	23	13	86	15	29	66	52	33	62	75	68	16	9
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	56	43	53	85	11	52	71	56	55	60	77	--	--	18
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	29	12	35	82	18	53	88	71	47	76	65	53	47	29
Chicago														
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=92)	52	26	17	64	37	36	63	36	41	23	52	--	--	14
Manley H.S. (n=71)	52	24	22	56	22	21	42	31	55	17	63	66	18	4
Denver														
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=87)	49	37	41	84	40	59	79	64	49	24	84	93	15	14
East H.S. (n=109)	59	44	60	90	64	75	91	75	36	27	89	94	27	21
Manual H.S. (n=77)	67	29	49	87	61	78	87	79	48	22	90	99	30	26

Note: Students could select more than one response, hence the percentages for a given school exceed 100.

*These categories did not appear on the standard questionnaire.

The average number of activities varied by school and site, as shown below:

	Average Number of Activities Student Participates In
Chattanooga	
Alton Park Jr. H.S (n=45)	2.07
Howard H.S. (n=85)	2.01
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	2.33
Riverside H.S. (n=20)	2.10
Chicago	
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=98)	1.36
Manley H.S. (n=72)	1.73
Denver	
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	2.32
East H.S. (n=109)	2.67
Manual H.S. (n=77)	2.61

The greatest number of activities was reported by Denver students, and the least by Chicago students.

Participation in enriching activities. From the complete list of after-school activities, two independent judges selected five that could serve to enhance knowledge and skills. They were:

- joining school clubs and organizations;
- attending plays;
- reading for own enjoyment or for information;
- going to the movies; and
- visiting museums.

We then tabulated the percentages of students in each school who reported participation in none, one, two, three or more of these activities.

The results were as follows:

	Percentages			
	None	One	Two	Three or More
Chattanooga				
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	4	13	42	40
Howard H.S. (n=85)	4	28	34	34
Kirkman H.S. (n=62)	11	21	36	32
Riverside H.S. (n=20)	20	25	35	20
Chicago				
Chicago Vocational H.S. (n=98)	24	35	26	15
Manley H.S. (n=72)	12	31	31	26
Denver				
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	3	6	20	71
East H.S. (n=109)	0	5	13	83
Manual H.S. (n=77)	0	8	17	75

The highest participation was shown by the Denver students; sizeable majorities in each school reported that they participated in three or more of the activities. Chicago and Chattanooga students reported similar levels of participation, with the majority of students reporting one or two activities. A minority of students in all schools but Denver's East and Manual High Schools reported no participation in "enriching" activities.

Aspiration. As a measure of students' desire to change the way they used their after-school time, we asked students in the interview sample, "Would you rather be doing something else after school?" The answers were:

	Percentages	
	Would Rather Be Doing Something Else	Satisfied With Present Activities
Chattanooga		
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	29	71
Howard H.S. (n=85)	47	53
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	53	47
Chicago		
Manley H.S. (n=70)	56	44
Denver		
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=85)	33	64
East H.S. (n=107)	39	61
Manual H.S. (n=76)	28	72

The majority of students in all schools except Riverside and Manley responded "no" to the question. Preferred alternatives among the students who wanted to change the way they spent their time are shown in Table 4.12. The category with the highest frequency of response in nearly all the schools was having a part-time job.

Self-Improvement

Under this heading fall (1) the goals students have for personal development and (2) the efforts they have planned to make the desired improvements.

Aspirations. The item to elicit students' desire to improve themselves was as follows:

> Students your age sometimes have certain ways in which they want to improve. What are some of the ways in which you would like to improve yourself?

TABLE 4.12
Desired After-School Activities

	Sports	Nonorganized Sports	Club or Cultural Events	Visit With Friends	Study	Part-Time Job	Watch T.V.	Nothing	Hang Around	Volunteer Work	Band Rehersal	Work
Chattanooga												
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=12)	8	8	25	17	17	42	0	0	0	0	0	0
Howard H.S. (n=37)	13	8	3	0	13	68	0	3	0	3	0	3
Riverside H.S. (n=7)	29	0	0	0	14	27	14	0	0	0	14	27
Chicago												
Manley H.S. (n=37)	13	5	5	8	3	73	0	0	0	5	0	0
Denver												
Cole Jr. High (n=29)	21	34	3	24	0	24	3	0	7	0	0	3
East H.S. (n=40)	17	7	7	20	17	37	12	2	2	0	0	10
Manual H.S. (n=20)	10	15	5	10	0	30	0	10	10	10	0	15

As shown below, a majority of students in each school indicated that there were areas they would like to develop.

	Students Who Named Improvements	Students Who Did Not Name Improvements
Chattanooga		
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=45)	91	9
Howard H.S. (n=85)	69	31
Riverside H.S. (n=17)	94	6
Chicago		
Manley H.S. (n=72)	78	22
Denver		
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=88)	80	20
East H.S. (n=109)	83	17
Manual H.S. (n=77)	83	17

The improvements cited fell into eight categories: academic, job-related, behavior, athletic, relations with others, appearance, general improvement, and artistic. As shown in Table 4.13, sizeable majorities named academic improvement. General improvement was the second most popular response, with 17 percent (Manual) to 42 percent (East) of the students citing this type. Other improvements were named by up to a quarter of the students.

Planned efforts. Students who responded in the affirmative were also asked,

> Are there things you will do to improve yourself in (category mentioned)?

Some of the responses reflected an awareness of plausible actions that might lead to a desired improvement:

> (Want to improve) my study habits. Taking my books home everyday and taking time out to study.

TABLE 4.13
Categories of Self-Improvements

	Percentages							
	Academic	Job-Related	Behavioral	Athletic	Social Interaction	Appearance	General	Artistic Skills
Chattanooga								
Alton Park Jr. H.S. (n=41)	73	7	22	5	7	15	39	5
Howard H.S. (n=59)	88	15	3	8	8	3	25	2
Riverside H.S. (n=16)	131	6	31	19	37	6	19	0
Chicago								
Manley H.S. (n=56)	68	7	12	9	36	12	58	7
Denver								
Cole H.S. (n=70)	97	4	26	13	36	27	27	1
East H.S. (n=90)	73	9	3	17	29	23	42	8
Manual H.S. (n=64)	62	11	28	12	31	19	17	6

Note: Students could name more than one area for improvement, hence the total percentages exceed 100.

> I wish I could stop making those C's because I know I could make A's. Could improve on my homework. Slow down. When I go fast, I make mistakes.
>
> Changing my attitudes more -- stop getting up in the morning fussing. Try to get up, have a smile on my face, speak to everyone nice and don't let anything bother me.
>
> To be a better student and not so lazy. (By) doing my homework more and paying more attention in class.

Other students cited efforts of questionnable efficacy:

> (Want to improve) dedication to what I'm doing in general. (How?) Thinking about it.

Were the students who were already doing well in school the ones most likely to have a plan for self-improvement? To answer this question, we examined cross-tabulations of grade point average (high and low, as determined by a median split) with plans for making academic improvements (cited academic improvements vs. did not cite academic improvements). In all schools except Alton Park, the two variables were not related. At Alton Park, more high performance students than expected by chance said they wanted to make academic improvements. From none (Riverside) to 13 percent (Alton Park, Howard, and Cole) of the students with low grade point averages did not mention academic improvement as a desired goal. Much higher were the percentages of students who reported frequent problems of classroom-related behavior and did not cite improvement in behavior. Percentages ranged from 30 (Manley) to 61 (Howard).

Summary and Discussion

Overall, the students report that they use their after-school time constructively. Most named studying as the number one activity. But given the limited amount of time students spent on homework, it is possible that housework and T.V. watching (the second and third most frequent activities) occupy a great deal of their spare

'time. Reading for enjoyment ranked highest in a checklist of activities, but it was virtually absent in students' open-ended accounts of leisure time use.

Reported participation in activities that may enhance general knowledge and skills was highest in Denver, and lowest in Chicago. The site differences may reflect differences in the opportunities available to students. Among the five activities we identified as enriching, three (attending plays, going to the movies, and visiting museums) require either money or the mere existence of the opportunity at all. Chattanooga and Chicago students, who are relatively less affluent than the Denver students, simply may not have the resources necessary to engage in these activities.

The findings on personal development indicate that students most often want to improve scholastically. Some are able to articulate plausible steps that might lead to the desired improvement, but others have little idea of what it takes to get there. And there is a group of students in each school that reports problems in the school-related behaviors, but does not see behavioral improvement as a goal for improvement.

In all of the findings we have reviewed in this section, a consistent pattern emerges: Students have many of the attitudes the program wants to foster, but the efforts that students report they are making are minimal in comparison to things they could be doing.

5. Implications and Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, we deal first with the specifics of program implementation: How do the current activities match the students whom the program serves? Then we turn to a broader discussion of where the program stands as of spring 1981.

MATCHING PRACTICE TO NEEDS: IMPLICATIONS OF THE BASELINE DATA

PUSH-EXCEL has undertaken a number of activities aimed at affecting five related sets of outcomes: the atmosphere at the school, the opportunity of the students to excel, the aspirations of the students, their expectations about the future, and the level of effort they expend to achieve academic and career success. Of each set, we ask:

- What is PUSH-EXCEL doing to achieve this set of outcomes?
- When the students came into PUSH-EXCEL, where did they stand with regard to this set of outcomes?
- What are the implications for future practice?

Atmosphere and Opportunity

Current practice. The program's inputs to enhance atmosphere and opportunity fall into three broad categories: activities to increase teacher and student investments in the school; activities to increase community investments in the schools and its students; and activities to increase parental involvement in the home and in the school.

Activities to increase teacher and student investments have been of the following kinds:

- Schoolwide improvement activities. This category includes activities such as clean-up campaigns, distribution of school disciplinary codes, and attendance programs.

- Mobilization of school staff. The program has asked principals to deliver a "State of the School Address" each fall, outlining the goals and standards of the school, and to serve on school advisory councils. Teachers are asked to sign a pledge to increase their efforts on behalf of students. In one or two schools, the program has initiated activities to increase communication among staff in the school and interaction between teachers and parents.

- Mobilization of student leaders. This heading embraces activities to organize and highlight students who already exhibit qualities the program wants to foster in all the students. An example is East High's (Denver) PUSH-EXCEL Effective Positive Peers (PEEPP Club).

Activities to increase community investments have included efforts to organize task forces and neighborhood groups, and solicit donations. Other efforts have tried to recruit volunteers to tutor students, speak at school assembly programs, conduct special student activities (e.g., career class), and sponsor student organizations.

Improvement in the atmosphere created through parental involvement has been sought through:

- parent pledges to monitor study hours, visit the schools at report card time, maintain close contact with the school staff, and pick up the child's test scores;

- special activities that have varied from one-time study skills workshops to luncheons at the school; and

- increased communication from the school to the home, through newsletters, media presentations, and progress reports.

This roster of activities is long for the sites taken in combination. For any one site, the list of activities is much shorter. Levels of participation have been high when the activity was a passive one (e.g., attending an assembly program). Levels of participation have been very low for activities that called for voluntary investment of time by the students, parents, or other citizens of the community.

The baseline state of affairs. The picture that emerged from the student interviews was more positive than expected. Using schoolwide indices of atmosphere -- absenteeism, suspensions, and drop-out rates, for example -- most of the PUSH-EXCEL schools appeared to have the problems of low achievement and low morale that prompted PUSH-EXCEL. But the students' responses to items about atmosphere often suggested the opposite. Overall, the data showed high proportions of students who were proud of their school, found their courses interesting, and who saw (and valued) considerable athletic and academic competitiveness among their peers.

Teachers were less upbeat. When they described the students, parents, and general teaching environment, the responses were more critical and negative than the ones from the students. Teachers did, however, indicate widespread feelings of efficacy: teachers could effect changes for the better. The sense of helplessness that has often been ascribed to teachers in urban schools was not widely reflected in our data.

The parents' responses are difficult to interpret as a one-time set of answers -- the more informative analyses will emerge from a comparison of the "before" and "after" answers. In general terms, the responses are consistent with a situation in which parents verbalize their support for education, but are not actively engaging in activities that further the education that their children receive -- and this in turn is consistent with PUSH-EXCEL's reading of the problem.

Implications. Taking the students' responses at face value, the overall atmosphere at the schools in the sample was not a problem. That interpretation must be tempered by other considerations. The teachers' comments and the schoolwide indices argue that PUSH-EXCEL's efforts to raise general morale have a place. But the students in our samples were not visibly unhappy about the school environment, nor did they downplay the importance of the qualities of competitiveness and striving for excellence that PUSH-EXCEL intended to promote.

Aspiration, Expectancy, and Effort: Future Returns

Current practice. The theme most often associated with PUSH-EXCEL in the media presentations has been motivation for long-term achievement: "If you can conceive it, and believe it, you can achieve it." In this effort, it has been assumed that both aspirations and expectations must be raised. In practice, aspiration and expectancy are closely linked, and the same set of PUSH-EXCEL activities have been intended to achieve these outcomes in tandem. Three types of events have been used:

- motivational assembly programs, featuring speakers who represent a given line of work;
- field trips (e.g., to businesses and colleges); and
- special career and college-oriented activities, such as fairs and career weeks featuring workshops, assemblies, and mock interviews.

Of these activities, the motivational assembly programs have been the most frequent, with the most visible effects. The field trips and career/college promotions have been scattered among a few sites.

Baseline state of affairs. Overall, the students have set high goals for themselves. On each dimension of future aspiration -- careers, high school graduation, and post-high school plans -- the majority of students named a concrete aspiration. Only a minority were undecided about what kind of work they wanted to do for a living or what they wanted to do after high school. College and work in the professions were the most popular choices.

Expectancies were also high. Students were overwhelmingly optimistic about achieving their goals. Students very seldom perceived a discrepancy between becoming a doctor, or lawyer, or engineer, and the realities of their current situation.

Implications. In one sense, the findings about aspirations are good news for PUSH-EXCEL. Judging from the students' responses, the great majority -- including the most disadvantaged -- have high hopes. Raising aspirations and building expectancies does not seem to be a task to which PUSH-EXCEL must devote intense effort.

In another sense, however, perhaps the job is simply more complicated than had originally been imagined. The notion that "I may have two strikes against me, but I can still succeed" is at the heart of the PUSH-EXCEL message. The program has always tried to inspire high expectations even if they were "unrealistic" to some degree. PUSH-EXCEL has never advocated that expectations ignore reality; but in many cases they did just that -- as in the case of the student who reads at a fourth grade level who says he expects to become a doctor, or the student who refuses to take math courses who says that she expects to become an engineer. In these cases, PUSH-EXCEL may well have a role not in inspiring high expectations, but in helping the student convert the expectation into a roadmap for reaching the goal. And that leads to the third link in the chain that PUSH-EXCEL tries to foster, effort to achieve.

PUSH-EXCEL has few activities that are explicitly intended to foster effort to achieve long-term career goals. The motivational speakers, field trips, and materials on college and career have been seen primarily as tools to increase aspirations and expectancies. In fact, however, it appears that these activities may be addressing the need just cited: not a need for higher aspirations, but a need for a roadmap.

The responses of the students suggest that this need might be met in two ways through the types of activities already underway.

First, PUSH-EXCEL can supply more and better information about the prerequisites for various careers, the ways to get the needed training, and what needs to be done during the high school years. The career workshops

that some sites have held seem to be highly appropriate to this function.

Second, PUSH-EXCEL can help students learn how to predict the future more accurately -- that is, help students understand cause and effect as it relates to their aspirations. This has been one of the main themes in the Rev. Jackson's speeches, using famous performers as a springboard for discussing the behind-the-scenes effort that precedes the visible result. Both the motivational assemblies and the field trips seem to be useful vehicles for conveying this type of education at more length and greater frequency. For example, the presentation of role models could be structured so that students could get more than a glimpse of the figures and an inspirational message. The program brochure "PUSH for Excellence"* contains specific directions in this regard. Suggested activities include: building lesson plans around the model and student preparation of biographical sketches.

The existence of high aspirations and expectancies appears to offer one of PUSH-EXCEL's best opportunities. The basic motivation may exist, but large gaps remain to be filled to convert the ambition into concrete steps in the right direction.

Aspiration, Expectancy, and Effort in the Present: Academic Performance

Current practice. Improvement of academic performance is an objective in virtually all the schools we are studying. Activities fall into five categories:

- Public recognition of academic achievement. A variety of activities fall under this heading: posting the names of honor students on school bulletin boards; presentation of awards (such as certificates) at school and assembly programs; and banquets for students making the honor roll. In addition to providing recognition of students who are already doing well, these activities are intended to encourage poor performers to do better.

*PUSH for Excellence. Chicago: PUSH-EXCEL, Inc., n.d.

- Follow-up of pledge students. This has been an activity conducted in Denver high schools and East High School in Kansas City. In Denver, for example, teacher advisors track pledged students' grades, and hold individual and group counseling sessions.

- Tutoring programs. Chattanooga has organized after-school tutoring programs, staffed by volunteers and held in neighborhood churches.

- Inspirational messages. This is the primary mechanism for raising students' expectancies for success in school. The messages are delivered through three main channels: Adult role models who speak at assembly programs; daily broadcasts of one-line PUSH-EXCEL slogans broadcast over the school intercom (Chattanooga); and PUSH-EXCEL staff interaction with students.

Baseline state of affairs. The actual levels of achievement (grades, test scores) will be presented in subsequent reports. For this report, the analysis was confined to students' self-reports on academic performance, and their predictions of their progress during high school.

The great majority of students voice their desire to graduate from high school, and their confidence that they will do so. The level of optimism about academic success in the near future is more varied: a majority expects to do quite well, but a small minority expects to do quite poorly. The students make the effort to do homework, although sizeable proportions report spending less than an hour a day. A small group reports daily or weekly infringments of school rules or inadequate preparation and inappropriate classroom behavior. Only a handful of students in each of the samples reported that they had been suspended or that their parents had been called in to the schools on disciplinary matters.

On all of these indicators, the results are roughly what one should expect from a random sample of a school population. The analysis of subgroups reveals two other

findings of potential interest to PUSH-EXCEL: Self-reported expectancies bear no relationship to grades, and self-reported level of efforts bears only a weak relationship to grades.

Implications. On one count, the results from the baseline are highly consistent with the logic behind PUSH-EXCEL: The program has always assumed that there was substantial room for improvement in the students' efforts to achieve academically. The students' self reports about homework and other efforts to achieve bear this out. The results taken at face value show large numbers of students with poor academic performance who are putting a low level of effort into their schooling. If one assumes that the self-reports of study time are probably inflated, the discrepancy between what students could do and are doing is even greater.

On two other counts, the results flag points in PUSH-EXCEL's rhetoric that may need rethinking. The data tend to contradict PUSH-EXCEL's assumption that low expectations and low performance are cause and effect. And they tend to suggest that the perceived relationship between level of effort and grades is a weak one. These findings are tentative -- self-report data on such topics can be misleading. But the findings parallel those in the discussion of the "future" and the students' perceptions of cause and effect. The program may have a parallel role: to spell out roadmaps, leading step by step from increased effort to improved results. Exhortations to study more are probably not enough -- if a student does not know how to take notes, how to organize reading material, or even how to listen effectively, more time spent on "studying" is unlikely to produce improvement.

OVERVIEW

Our current assessment of PUSH-EXCEL echoes the one that we made in Technical Report 1 in March 1980: PUSH-EXCEL is still in a developmental phase. It echoes the one we made six months ago, in Technical Report 2: Changes are underway, and they are positive ones, but there is not yet the basis for determining what works and why.

In part, we must emphasize that this repetitive story is a function of the reporting system for the

evaluation. In the traditional evaluation, the only major technical report would have been the one that was produced after three years of observing the program. In this case, the evaluation has been issuing progress reports at six month intervals. Not that much changes in six months. We did not have data on the effects of PUSH-EXCEL on the students in November; we still do not have them in March -- the school year is not over.

In these conclusions then, our main audience is still PUSH-EXCEL itself. During the last six months, what have been the main signs of progress? Which problems have been most intractable? Which areas of concern seem to require PUSH-EXCEL's highest priority attention?

The signs of progress are found in the area that was formerly the main focus of criticism: administration and internal coherence of the national program. Technical Report 2 discussed the implementation guidelines that were prepared in the summer of 1980. During the most recent reporting period, two other specific steps were undertaken: an internal monitoring system is being developed (the contract has been let), and training for site directors has been substantially upgraded. On both of these dimensions, ideology is being supplemented by concrete procedures and strategies. This was a major need of the program, and is being addressed.

The problem areas have symptoms and causes. We start with the symptoms:

- At the sites, there is still a preponderance of one-shot activities with no explicit rationale. Moreover, the activities often require little more from participants than simple attendance, and as the baseline diagnosis revealed, much of the activity is directed at one class of needs.

- The "total involvement" model, which requires the mobilization of volunteers to get the work done, has been implemented minimally. The staff continues to make contacts with businesses, community groups, and other potential partners, but it asks for little more

than donations or occasionally, special efforts such as personal appearances at a school assembly program. Getting volunteers to take on tasks related to the motivation and atmosphere dimensions has not been an emphasis.

- No one is in a position to deal with these program concerns. The national staff's technical assistance to these sites is limited almost exclusively to organizational crises. While the national office has taken a more consistent role in handling day-to-day administrative matters, little has been done to deal with programmatic concerns. The national staff's on-site presence has occurred by and large when a crisis has emerged, or when a special event (such as fundraising) is held. Observations of day-to-day operations in the schools have been limited to Chicago and Buffalo.

The underlying reasons for these problems go to the heart of the question, can PUSH-EXCEL be a success?

First, PUSH-EXCEL must live within constraints that are beyond its power to change. The constraints do not absolutely, irrevocably prevent the program from achieving its goals, but they raise hard questions about how the program should proceed.

Jurisdictional constraints are endemic. Given the school's structure -- teachers report to principals, not to the community -- what are the limits on PUSH-EXCEL's direct action to influence teacher behavior? Given the scheduling and logistical constraints associated with a school day and a school year, how much can the program realistically be expected to expand its field trips, or its assembly programs, or its other activities that must impinge on the regular schedule?

Other constraints have to do with the geographic dispersion of the students. Bussing is a reality for some of the schools, and parents may live miles from the school. Can PUSH-EXCEL do more than it is already doing? What level and type of parental involvement is reasonable?

These are examples of the constraints that make decisions on next steps difficult ones, no matter how much skill and imagination the program staff brings to its planning. But there are basic planning tasks that remain.

One reason for the episodic, one-shot nature of the activities is that no one, either at the national office or in the individual sites, has a plan that takes the program beyond the initial phase -- getting the students' attention -- to the phase that stimulates greater effort. The activities that are already underway in the sites represent the sum of the existing ideas. National's Implementation Guide does not take the sites further than they have already gone on their own, taking the Rev. Jackson's basic prescriptions as their guide.

One reason for the failure to make good on the implementation of the "total involvement" approach is, again, that no one has a plan for doing it, beyond that which has already been tried. Some of the sites -- Chattanooga is the best example -- have tried to enlist active, participatory support from parents and others. But the lesson these efforts have taught is a negative one: mobilizing continuing, widespread support is an exceptionally difficult task. The techniques that can mobilize support for a one-time event are not enough. But knowing this has not pointed the way to answers to the question: What does mobilize such long-term support? The Rev. Jackson set out some basic, concrete objectives in this regard (e.g., parents should monitor two hours of study time per evening). How does PUSH-EXCEL propose to get parents to do that? To date, the program has not developed answers.

These problems have been persistent despite the effort that has gone into program development. What are the appropriate next steps? PUSH-EXCEL's experience suggests three alternatives.

The first alternative is to leave the sites alone, let them develop in their separate ways, and rely on each community to make the determination of whether the program is worth it. The existing programs can be criticized on grounds that they do not implement the rhetoric that first attracted support to PUSH-EXCEL. Such criticism is irrelevant to the issue of whether the programs that did develop are answering local needs.

Under this alternative, the evaluation will continue to document results of the separate programs on a site-by-site basis, providing material to help local administrators and officials decide whether to sustain the program (or a variant) when the federal funding ends. Under this alternative, the role of the PUSH-EXCEL national office would remain much as it is now.

A second alternative treats PUSH-EXCEL as an in-school enrichment program. Whatever its original intentions, PUSH-EXCEL in operation has become predominantly a set of activities that are intended to extend, enrich, and provide backstops to the standard instructional mix, administered with the school as the focal point. In this role, PUSH-EXCEL deals with a wide-open set of opportunities. There is no shortage of recognized needs to improve public education, especially in urban schools. But: What is PUSH-EXCEL's unique contribution to this effort? What can PUSH-EXCEL do better than the educational establishment? In the original conception, PUSH-EXCEL added the ingredient of community and parental participation. In practice, this has been minimal. If it is to remain so, then PUSH-EXCEL must carve out some basis for legitimacy as a source of innovation and improvement in the schools. The PUSH-EXCEL Institute could be a vehicle for this, and presumably would have to play a central role if this alternative were to be pursued.

The third alternative is to make a concerted effort to make good on the original concept of "total involvement," especially as it relied on the contributions of local parents and other concerned citizens. The most revolutionary aspect of the PUSH-EXCEL concept was its assertion that the guts of a PUSH-EXCEL program would not be its full-time paid staff, but the people in the community itself. The program envisioned a skeleton support staff of paid personnel, whose main function would be to implement the initiatives of volunteers who provided most of the ideas and virtually all of the clout. There are many reasons why the early vision has not been put into place. Some of them are based on practical constraints that cannot be changed. But it happens that the parent organization, Operation PUSH, has a long history of success in mobilizing communities. That experience, and the confidence of Operation PUSH in the power of communities

to effect change, was the genesis of PUSH-EXCEL. Now that progress has been made in solidifying the administrative center of PUSH-EXCEL, it may be an appropriate time to take advantage of PUSH-EXCEL's special expertise, and reemphasize the strategies that were supposed to make PUSH-EXCEL work in the first place.

Appendix A

TABLE A-1

Reported Frequency of Tardiness and Class Absences by Performance Level

		Percentages	
		Low GPA	High GPA
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr.H.S. (n=35)	Frequent	20	3
	Infrequent	49	29
Howard H.S. (n=66)	Frequent	51	11
	Infrequent	26	12
Kirkman H.S. (n=58)	Frequent	14	9
	Infrequent	36	41
Riverside H.S. (n=13)	Frequent	15	23
	Infrequent	23	38
Denver			
Cole Jr. H.S. (n=75)	Frequent	26	17
	Infrequent	22	36
East H.S. (n=100)	Frequent	25	27
	Infrequent	17	31
Manual H.S. (n=76)	Frequent	21	26
	Infrequent	14	38

TABLE A-2
Reported Frequency of Problem Classroom Behaviors by Performance Level

		Percentages	
		Low GPA	High GPA
Chattanooga			
Alton Park Jr.H.S. (n=35)	Frequent	46	14
	Infrequent	23	17
Howard H.S. (n=65)	Frequent	55	11
	Infrequent	21	12
Kirkman H.S. (n=58)	Frequent	22	24
	Infrequent	28	26
Riverside H.S. (n=13)	Frequent	23	38
	Infrequent	15	23
Denver			
Cole Jr.H.S. (n=75)	Frequent	27	29
	Infrequent	20	24
East H.S. (n=101)	Frequent	17	18
	Infrequent	26	40
Manual H.S. (n=76)	Frequent	14	35
	Infrequent	20	30

Appendix B

EXHIBIT B.1

PRETEST

FEDAC Form No. S110 Expiration Date: 28 Feb 1982

This report is authorized by law (20 U.S.C. 1221e). While you are not required to respond, your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.

PUSH-EXCEL EVALUATION

Student Interview Form

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROJECT

School District _____ School _____

Student ID No. _____ birthdate _____

Grade _____ Sex _____ Race _____

Interviewer _____ Date _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS: You must explain the following statements at the beginning of each interview:

Introductory Remarks:

ON CONFIDENTIALITY: We will use ID numbers (no names) and will not discuss this questionnaire with anyone. Information will be assembled to report program activities and results, not to discuss specific individuals.

You are not representing PUSH-EXCEL, but are a member of an evaluation team that is visiting the program in several cities where it operates. (Describe if necessary.)

We are talking to many students, teachers, and parents in each of the cities to find out what students do and do not like about the program.

We are trying to learn about the program so other schools can start programs like this.

Students are not required to answer any questions they do not want to answer. Ask if the student has any questions before you begin.

We are interested in their experiences during this school year only. Some questions will refer only to the last few months.

● SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

1. **How do you feel about school?** _____

   Why do you feel this way? _____

2. **What courses are you taking this semester that you didn't have to take?** *(List electives):*

3. **How interesting are most of your courses to you?**

   - ☐ Very interesting
   - ☐ Quite interesting
   - ☐ Fairly interesting
   - ☐ Slightly interesting
   - ☐ Very uninteresting

   What is your most interesting course you are taking now? _____ **The least interesting?** _____

4. **About how much time do you spend in an average day on all your homework?**

   - ☐ None
   - ☐ Less than ½ hour
   - ☐ ½ hour to 59 minutes
   - ☐ 1 hour to 1 hour 59 minutes
   - ☐ 2 hours to 2 hours 59 minutes
   - ☐ 3 or more hours

4. **(Con't.)**

Do you complete it? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, how long would it take you to do it?

- ☐ Less than ½ hour
- ☐ ½ hour to 59 minutes
- ☐ 1 hour to 1 hour 59 minutes
- ☐ 2 hours to 2 hours 59 minutes
- ☐ 3 or more hours

5. **Where do you usually study?** *(Probe for description of study area, presence of other people, distractions)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Here are some questions dealing with things schools make rules about. We're interested in those things you might do that would get you into trouble at school. The only way we can learn about how students your age act is by students giving honest answers to each question. However, you do not have to respond to questions that you think are too personal to discuss.

How often	Never	Hardly ever	About once a month	About once a week	Almost every day
6. do you fight with other students					
7. do you argue with your teachers					
8. do you goof-off in class					
9. do you come late to school					
10. are you late to class					
11. do you skip classes					
12. do you come to class unprepared					
13. do you do things that you know will make the teacher angry					
14. do you cheat on tests					
15. do you turn in sloppy assignments					
16. do you copy someone else's schoolwork					
17. are you kept after school					
18. do you turn in incomplete assignments ?					

19. **Have your parents been called in to a disciplinary hearing with the principal in the last school year?** *(Explore reasons, outcomes, role of PUSH-EXCEL staff, if applicable)*

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once or twice
- ☐ Three or more times

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. **Have you been suspended from school in the last school year?** *(Explore reasons, outcome, role of PUSH-EXCEL staff, if applicable)*

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once or twice
- ☐ Three or more times

_____

_____

_____

_____

21. **Have you ever dropped out of school (this school or one you were in before)?** *(Explore reasons for dropping out, motivation for return)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

_____

_____

_____

● PEER GROUP

22. **Has anyone you know well dropped out of school?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, was the person your brother, sister, good friend, acquaintance, other? _____

_____

What has made you stay in school? _____

_____

23. **Different kinds of students are popular in different kinds of schools. What does it take to be popular in this school?**

_____

_____

24. **Are there certain types of students who tend to have high status or be looked up to?** _____

_____

25. **Are there (other) types of students who tend to be looked down on?** *(Probe: What students have lower status or are looked up to LESS than others?)*

_____

26. **Are there any students here looked up to, or looked down on, because they are in certain programs—like college preparatory or vocational programs?**

_____

27. **What do you do when you see friends or other students breaking school rules?**

☐ Nothing
☐ Warn them that they are breaking a rule
☐ Discuss the violation with the principal or teacher
☐ Try to prevent further violations (How?) _____

_____

_____

● EMPLOYMENT

28. **Are you working now?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what do you do? _____

How did you get the job? _____

How are you doing? _____

_____

29. **Have you had (other) jobs in the past?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what did you do? _____

How did you get the job? _____

How did you do? *(If quit or fired, obtain reasons)* _____

_____

_____

30. **How do you spend the money you earn?** *(Probe: priorities among the ways money is spent)* _____

_____

INTERVIEWER NOTE: *If student responds that he/she saves money, skip to items 31b and c. If no explicit mention of saving is made, ask items 31a, b, and c.*

31a. **Do you have any money saved?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. **About how much do you have saved?** _____

c. **What do you expect to use it for?** _____

● FUTURE PLANS

32. **Do you plan to finish high school?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why is that? _____

_____

If yes, how certain are you that you will actually graduate?

- ☐ Certain
- ☐ Fairly certain
- ☐ Less certain (chances about 50/50)
- ☐ Chances pretty slim (much less than 50/50)

33. **What sort of work do you think you might do for a living?** _____

_____

How do you plan to get into this sort of work? _____

_____

_____

34. **What do you think you might do after you graduate from (or drop out of) high school?**

- ☐ Attend vocational school
- ☐ Go to junior college
- ☐ Go to college
- ☐ Haven't decided
- ☐ Find a job (what type?)
- ☐ Join the military
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

35. **What can you do in high school that will help you reach this goal?** _____

_____

What kinds of things have you done to help you reach your goals? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Talk to PUSH-EXCEL staff
- ☐ Take courses
- ☐ Do volunteer work
- ☐ Visit local business offices
- ☐ Talk to guidance counselor
- ☐ Visit college or vocational school
- ☐ Write for information (catalogues, applications)
- ☐ Take entrance examination (e.g., SAT, ACT)
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

36. **How did you decide on this future?**

- ☐ Talked to career counselor
- ☐ Famous people in the news
- ☐ TV/radio/movies
- ☐ Example among family or friends
- ☐ Read about it (where?) _____
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

37. **What do you think your chances are of having this future?**

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Not so good
- ☐ Not good at all

38. **Have you talked with your parents (or guardians) about what you are going to do after high school?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what do they want you to do after high school?

_____

If no, what do you THINK they want you to do after high school?

_____

● PARTICIPATION IN PUSH-EXCEL, EXTRACURRICULAR, AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

39. **What do you usually do after school?** ***(Probe: responsibilities at home, informal activities with peers, etc.)***
Where do you usually go?

_____

_____

_____

_____

40. **Would you RATHER be doing something else after school?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what? _____

_____

41. **Here is a list of activities that students participate in after school or on weekends. Which ones have you done in the past year?**

	How many times last year?	Describe what you did
Team sports (baseball, etc.)	☐	_____
School clubs or organizations (specify) _____	☐	_____
Attend a play	☐	_____
Read for own enjoyment or for information	☐	_____
Go to movies	☐	_____
Visit museums	☐	_____
Attend special events (circus, etc.)	☐	_____
Outdoor recreation activities	☐	_____
Visit another city	☐	_____
Church activities (choir, youth group)	☐	_____
Neighborhood recreation center activities	☐	_____
Volunteer activities	☐	_____
Pursue hobbies (specify) _____	☐	_____
_____		_____
Other (specify) _____	☐	_____

42. **What do you know about the PUSH-EXCEL program in this school?** _____

INTERVIEWER NOTE: *If student indicates no knowledge of the program, skip to item 44.*

43. **What do you think of the program so far?** _____

44. **Do you participate in any of these PUSH-EXCEL activities?** *(Provide checklist for activities in the school)*

45. **What do you expect to get out of your participation?**

● PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

46. **How does your school rate on these features?**

	Very High	High	Average	Low	Very Low
School pride					
School spirit					
Participation of parents					
Participation of community people					
School building and facilities					
Courses offered					
Principal's interest in the school					
Cooperation among students, teachers, and principal					
Student's enthusiasm for learning					
Cleanliness of the school grounds					

● CRIMINAL JUSTICE CONTACTS

INTERVIEWER NOTE: *Read this to the student before the questions in this section are read:*

"You may think that some of these questions are none of my business. That's OK, just tell me so, and we'll move on to another question."

47. **Have you ever been hassled by the police?** *(Collect incident—what happened, who was involved, outcome)*

☐ Never ☐ Once or twice ☐ Three or more times

48. **Have you been sent to court in the last year?** *(Explore reason, outcome)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

49. **Have you been on probation in the last year?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, why? _____

_____

● MOTIVATION, ATTITUDES, AND EXPECTATIONS

50. **As you think of your future life, what is the picture of the way you would like life to work out for you?**

_____

_____

51. **When you think of the kind of person you would like to be as an adult, who is the one person you know that you would most want to be like?**

What is it about that person you admire? *(Probe: Can you tell me more about this person?)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

52. **How do you expect your academic performance this year will compare with others in your class?**

☐ I'll do better than 90 percent of the others
☐ I'll do better than 70 percent of the others
☐ I'll do better than 50 percent of the others
☐ I'll do better than 30 percent of the others
☐ I'll do better than 10 percent of the others

53. **Can you tell me what are some of the things you feel pretty happy about these days? Try to include everything that is important to you—your family, friends, school, or other things you may be happy about or pleased with.** *(Probe: The most recent incident that made student feel good. How did it come about? What did you do? What happened? How important was it?)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

54. **Many students have told us about things they are not completely happy about. What are some things you are NOT too happy about these days?**
(Probe: The most recent incident that student is not too happy about. How did it come about? What did you do? What happened? How important was it?)

_____

_____

_____

_____

55. **Do you think it is better to plan your life a good way ahead, or would you say life is too much a matter of luck to plan ahead very far?**

_____

56. **When you do make plans ahead, do you usually get to carry out things the way you expected, or do things come up to make you change your plans?**

_____

57. **Have you usually felt pretty sure that your life would work out the way you want it to, or have there been times when you have not been sure about it?**

_____

58. **Some people feel they can run their lives pretty much the way they want to; others feel the problems of life are sometimes too big for them. Which ones are you most like?**

_____

59. **Students your age sometimes have certain ways in which they want to improve. What are some of the ways in which you would like to improve yourself?**

First mention _____

_____

Second mention _____

_____

Third mention _____

_____

Fourth mention _____

_____

Fifth mention _____

_____

Are there things you will do to improve yourself in (*Mention*)? If yes, what are they? IF NOT ALREADY ASCERTAINED: What are you doing right now to improve in this area?

First mention _____

_____

Second mention _____

_____

60. **I wonder if you can think of the last time that you did something to help someone? Whom did you help? How did your involvement come about? What did you do? What happened?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Respondent ID No. _____

● INTERVIEWER NOTES

a. Honesty of response

Not honest at all	1	2	3	4	5	very honest

b. What came across to you during the interview that we might miss from reading the responses to the separate questions?

EXHIBIT B.2

PRETEST

PUSH-EXCEL EVALUATION

FEDAC Form No. S110 Expiration Date: 28 Feb 1982

This report is authorized by law (20 U.S.C. 1221e). While you are not required to respond, your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.

Student Questionnaire

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROJECT

Name of School _____ **City** _____

Birthdate _____ **Grade** _____ **Sex** _____ **Race** _____

Student ID. No. _____ **Date** _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS:

This evaluation is sponsored by the National Institute of Education, an agency of the Federal Government. Some of the questions we are going to ask you will sound very personal. They may be about problems you are having at school. You don't need to worry about anybody finding out how you answer. The papers will be arranged so that no one knows whose answers are whose, and your last name will not be recorded on the questionnaire. But even so, you may think that some of these questions are none of our business. That's okay, just don't answer them. But if you do want to answer them, it will really help us find out about the kinds of problems kids have in this school and the kinds of things that ought to be done about them.

We are interested in your experiences during this school year only. Some questions will refer only to the last few months.

For AIR Use only

1. **How do you feel about school in general? Do you like it . . .** *(check one)*

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Not very much
- ☐ Not at all

2. **What courses are you taking this semester that you didn't have to take?** *(list)*

_____

_____

_____

3. **How interesting are most of your courses to you?** *(check one)*

- ☐ Very interesting
- ☐ Quite interesting
- ☐ Fairly interesting
- ☐ Slightly interesting
- ☐ Very uninteresting

4. **About how much time do you spend in an average day on all your homework?** *(check one)*

- ☐ None
- ☐ Less than ½ hour
- ☐ ½ hour to 59 minutes
- ☐ 1 hour to 1 hour 59 minutes
- ☐ 2 hours to 2 hours 59 minutes
- ☐ 3 or more hours

5. **When you study do you usually. . .** *(check one)*

- ☐ Listen to music or have the TV on?
- ☐ Go to the library or some other place?
- ☐ Try to find a quiet place in your home?
- ☐ Find time during school hours?

The next page lists some questions dealing with things schools make rules about. We're interested in those things you might do that could get you in trouble at school. The only way we can learn about how students your age act is by each student giving honest answers to each question. However, you do not have to respond to questions that you think are too personal to discuss. *(Check one answer for each question)*

For AIR use only

How often...

	NEVER	HARDLY EVER	ABOUT ONCE A MONTH	ABOUT ONCE A WEEK	ALMOST EVERYDAY
6. do you fight with other students					
7. do you argue with your teachers					
8. do you goof-off in class					
9. do you come late to school					
10. are you late to class					
11. do you skip classes					
12. do you come to class unprepared					
13. do you do things that you know will make the teacher angry					
14. do you cheat on tests					
15. do you turn in sloppy assignments					
16. do you copy someone else's school work					
17. are you kept after school					
18. do you turn in incomplete assignments?					

19. Do you plan to finish school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why is that? _____

_____

When do you expect to leave high school? _____

How certain are you that you actually will graduate? *(check one)*

- ☐ Certain of graduating
- ☐ Fairly certain
- ☐ Less certain (chances about 50/50)
- ☐ Chances pretty slim (much less than 50/50)

20. What sort of work do you think you might do for a living? _____

_____

How do you plan to get into this sort of work? _____

_____

_____

21. What do you think you might do after you graduate from (or drop out of) high school? *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ Attend vocational school
- ☐ Go to junior college
- ☐ Go to college
- ☐ Find a job (what type?) _____
- ☐ Join the military
- ☐ Other (specify): _____
- ☐ Haven't decided

For AIR use only

22. **What can you do in high school that will help you reach this goal?** *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ Talk to PUSH-EXCEL staff
- ☐ Take courses
- ☐ Do volunteer work
- ☐ Visit local business office
- ☐ Talk to guidance counselor
- ☐ Visit college or vocational school
- ☐ Write for information (catalogues, applications)
- ☐ Take entrance examination (i.e., SAT)
- ☐ Other (specify): _____
- ☐ Don't know

23. **How did you decide on this future?** *(Check all that apply)*

- ☐ Talked to career counselor
- ☐ Famous people in the news
- ☐ TV/radio/movies
- ☐ Example among family or friends
- ☐ Read about it (where?) _____
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

24. **What do you think your chances are of having this future?** *(Check one.)*

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Not so good
- ☐ Not good at all

25. **Here is a list of activities that students participate in after school or on weekends. Which ones have you done since September 1979?**
(Write in the amount of time you spent. For example, write "0" if you did not participate, "every day" if you participated that often, "once a week," etc.)

	How many times since September?
Team sports (baseball, etc.)	_____
School clubs or organizations (specify): _____	_____
Attend a play	_____
Read for own enjoyment or for information	_____
Visit museums	_____
Attend special events (circus, etc.)	_____
Outdoor recreation activities	_____
Visit another city	_____
Church activities (choir, youth group)	_____
Neighborhood recreation center activities	_____
Pursue hobbies (specify): _____	_____
Other (specify) _____	_____

For AIR use only

26. **Do you participate in any of these PUSH-EXCEL activities?** *(See attached list of activities. Write the names of the activities you participate in.)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. **Do many of your teachers seem to take a personal interest in you?** *(Check one.)*

- ☐ All of my teachers take a person interest in me
- ☐ Most of my teachers take a personal interest in me
- ☐ Some
- ☐ A few
- ☐ None

28. **How many teachers here seem excited about their work, and really seem to enjoy teaching?** *(Check one)*

- ☐ Nearly all of the teachers
- ☐ Most of them
- ☐ Some of them
- ☐ A few of them
- ☐ None of them

29. **How often do teachers here encourage extra effort from students?** *(Check one)*

- ☐ Almost always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

30. **How often do teachers at this school "talk down" to students, and act as if students don't know anything?** *(Check one)*

- ☐ Almost always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

31. **How often do your teachers like students to express opinions about how the school should be?** *(Check one)*

- ☐ Almost always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

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EXHIBIT B.3

PRETEST

PUSH-EXCEL EVALUATION

Parent Interview Form

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROJECT

School District _____ **School** _____

Parent ID No. _____ **Sex** _____ **Race** _____

Interviewer _____ **Date** _____

Time interview begins _____ **Time interview ends** _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS

You must read the following statements at the beginning of each interview:

This evaluation is sponsored by the National Institute of Education, an agency of the Federal Government. Some of the questions we are going to ask may sound personal, for example, about your child's problems in school. This information is, however, strictly confidential. If you do not want to answer any specific question, just tell me. We hope you will answer because it will help us find out about your child's problems, and what can and is being done to help him/her.

You should also explain:

- ON CONFIDENTIALITY: We will use ID numbers (no names) and will not discuss this conversation with anyone. Information will be assembled to report program activities and results, not to discuss specific individuals.
- You are not representing PUSH-EXCEL, but are a member of an evaluation team that is visiting the program in six cities where it operates.
- You are interviewing students, teachers, and parents in each of the cities to find out what they do and do not like about the program.
- Parents are not required to answer any questions they do not want to. Ask if the parents have any questions before they begin.

1. What do you know about the PUSH-EXCEL program?

What do you think of the program so far?

Do you participate in any of these activities (present list)?

Does your child participate in any PUSH-EXCEL activities (list)?

2. What do you think of (name of school)?

3. Does (name of school) try to get parents to participate in school activities? Has anyone from the school contacted you in the last year? (PROBE: number of contacts, by whom, reason for contact)

4. Do you attend functions sponsored by (name of school)? (PROBE: name functions, parent's overall attendance, attendance at school functions in which the child is participating)

5. Describe the things you do to encourage (child's name) in school.

6. What courses are (child's name) taking in school this semester?

   Courses

7. How do you feel about (child's name) grades for the last marking period?

8. Is (child's name) having any problems at school: (PROBE: explore reasons, outcome)

9. Have you talked with any of (child's name) teachers this year? (PROBE: who, when, reason, outcome)

What about other school staff? (PROBE: who, when, reason, outcome)

10. What are the positive things that (child's name) does? (PROBE: responsibilities at home, participation in school and community activities, employment, efforts to help others, interest in school and careers)

11 Does (child's name) do things that really disturb you? (PROBE: What are they? How often are these things a problem?)

Is (child's name) trying to change these things?

Are there ways in which you are trying to help him/her?

Are there things that the school or program is trying to do to help with these problems?

12. What do you want most for your children?

Are there ways you are helping them in these things?

13. Has (child's name) ever talked to you about his/her plans for the future? What did you think of these plans?

14. Are there people in the school or community who are really trying to help (child's name). (PROBE: who, what was done, what happened?)

15. In the past year have you tried to get other parents or community people to do things for the school?

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EXHIBIT B.4

PRETEST

PUSH-EXCEL EVALUATION

Teacher Interview Form

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROJECT

School District _____ **School** _____

Teacher ID No. _____ **Sex** _____ **Race** _____

Interviewer _____ **Date** _____ **Years of Teaching Experience** _____

Time interview begins _____ **Time interview ends** _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS

You must read the following statements at the beginning of each interview:

This evaluation is sponsored by the National Institute of Education, an agency of the Federal Government. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. We appreciate the help you will be giving us by answering these questions; but if you do not care to reply to any specific question, feel free to tell me so.

You should also explain:

- ON CONFIDENTIALITY: We will use ID numbers (no names) and will not discuss this conversation with anyone. Information will be assembled to report program activities and results, not to discuss specific individuals.
- You are not representing PUSH-EXCEL, but are a member of an evaluation team that is visiting the program in six cities where it operates.
- You are interviewing teachers to discuss the impact of the program on the school and the students.
- Teachers are not required to answer any questions they do not want to. Ask if the teachers have any questions before they begin.

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1. What major PUSH-EXCEL events did the students in your class attend (e.g., rally, convocation, conferences)?

What were the reactions of your class to the (name one event)?

2. Have you talked with any of your students' parents this year? ( ) YES ( ) NO
(If YES, PROBE: number of contacts, who initiated contacts, reason for contacts, outcome)

3. Are there people in the school or community who are really trying to help the students in your class?
( ) YES ( ) NO (If YES, PROBE: who, what was done, outcome)

4. How would you describe this school and its students? (Probe: staff, student, parent interest in the school; climate for learning; school spirit; student conduct, characteristics and behavior of particular groups of students)

5. What do you know about the PUSH-EXCEL program? (Probe: objectives, description)

What do you think of the program so far?

Do you participate in any of these activities (present list)?

6. What is your view of the facilities at this school? (Probe: size of student body in relation to size of school, condition of facilities and equipment)

7. What are the training and educational opportunities that (school name) provides for students and teachers? (Probe: types of opportunities, objectives, who participates, outcome)

8. What are the other training and educational opportunities that are available outside of (school name)? (Probe: what, objectives, who participates, outcome)

9. In what ways are you involved in school-related activities outside the classroom?

10. Do you feel that you can make a contribution to this school and its students? (If YES, probe: perceptions of effect on students, role in decisionmaking about school-related affairs, role in school policy formation)

GPO 680-030

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